

INDIVIDUAL STUDY PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

When I first came to the University of Washington as a Freshman back in 2014, I had a very clear plan of what I wanted to study. I had always loved cities, transportation, and infrastructure. I wanted to be the one building those things, so Civil Engineering seemed like the right path to take. However, as the intensity of the courses grew, my passion for the subject did not.

At the start of my Sophomore year of college, I joined a professional business fraternity, Alpha Kappa Psi. At the time, I had no idea just how much of an impact it would have on me as a person and on the course of my academic career. I realized through the many hours that I spent bonding and working with fellow members that the thing in life that was going to bring me true happiness was not necessarily a reputable, high paying job. It was being able to see that the work that I had done had made a positive impact on the people around me. I began to question whether or not the path of Civil Engineering was the right one for me. Then along came CEP.

After a full year of heavy engineering prerequisite courses, I needed a change. I was missing the connection between what I was doing in school and where I wanted to be in the future. CEP allowed me the freedom to pursue an academic course of study that I felt would be most directly beneficial to my career.

While I am no longer seeking a career in urban planning, the courses I took in CEP while on that track helped me to realize and understand the values that are important to me, and ultimately helped me to decide to devote my heart and my soul to pursue my passion for

film. The decisions to shift my goals away from Civil Engineering and Urban Planning were incredibly difficult, and I had spent a great deal of time contemplating over each of them. But I haven't had a single regret ever since. It's easy to look back at the past four years and say, "Well you're not doing engineering or planning anymore so that was a waste of time." But I don't think I would have been able to come to the decision to apply to film school without the time I spent learning and growing in CEP. I hope to be able to look back on this document in a few years and remember how this major would ultimately change my life.

COURSE OVERVIEW

FALL 2016

CEP 300 – CEP RETREAT

“Focuses on planning analysis assessment and development of the major. Opportunities for community building and all-major policy deliberation and decisions. Workshops for skill building in consensus, facilitation, and for major-specific activities such as developing individual study plans and study abroad experiences.”

The first retreat I had with CEP was important in that it served as a sort of orienting process more so than the actual orientation we had at the beginning of the year. Afterwards, I felt much more confident going forwards with where I wanted to go, and the people who I was going to be sharing that journey with.

CEP 301 – THE IDEA OF COMMUNITY

“Theories of community and communal rights and responsibilities. Experience building a learning community within major. Explores struggles for community in every sector of life.”

As the first class I took in CEP, I was excited to see that the things that I would be learning would be applicable to all walks of life. Learning about how our communities have formed over the course of history and in today’s world is incredibly important from a planning perspective as it is our communities that we are ultimately working for.

URBDP 404 – INTRODUCTION TO GIS (M)

“Provides students with introductory practical knowledge of Geographical Information Systems and Science for current and future coursework in urban planning.”

Knowing that GIS would be an incredibly important skill to have in my field of work, I wanted to get the ball rolling as soon as possible in acquiring that knowledge. I feel as if I have a good general understanding of the software and feel confident enough to do my own independent work with it.

FALL 2016 (cont.)

URBDP 405 – THE URBAN FORM (M)

“Elements, patterns, and evolution of urban form. The forces that shaped cities in history. Contemporary trends. Methods of urban morphological analysis as related to urban design and planning practices”

On top of the theory and the contextual history of urban form that we learned in the class, one of my favorite parts of this course was the project work. With each assignment, I felt as if I was gaining real professional skills and knowledge that I would be able to use later down the line in my career.

URBDP 480 – PLANNING AS A PROFESSION (M)

“Provides students interested in the planning profession an opportunity to understand the different pathways and career choices within the profession. Introduces students to guest professionals in various planning careers and highlight key issues, skills used, and tips to entering the field. Focuses on professional practice rather than analytical methods or theory.”

Taking the Planning as a Profession seminar in my first quarter as a CEP student was probably one of the best decisions I could have made. The speakers presented to us by David Blum were incredibly comprehensive in outlining the wide possibilities for careers in the field of planning, and I feel as if I came out of his course with a better understanding of where I am going to end up in the future than I did before.

WINTER 2017

CEP 302 – ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSE

“Explores issues of environmental crisis and societal responses. Readings and reflective analysis from broad selection of authoritative sources to develop grounded perspective in ecological literacy and consciousness. Concurrently, experiential education in challenges and practical responses to building sustainable society through participation in community-based environmental effort.”

I remember this course involved a lot of work with NEPA and helped me start to get an understanding of the amount of legislative work that goes into planning. This was also the first course our cohort had as a whole and gave us better opportunities to bond with one another.

URBDP 498 – LINK LIGHT RAIL PLANNING & DESIGN STUDIO (M)

“Explores conceptual designs for a prospective Sound Transit Link Light Rail station in North Seattle. Student designs created during the course will provide guidance to the City of Seattle for the planning and site design of a new station at 130th Street in Seattle.”

Before this course, I had yet to gain any substantial real-world experience through a job or internship. But this Link Light Rail planning and design studio was one of the most rewarding classes that I ever took at UW and was instrumental in helping me get my internship with SDOT.

URBDP 422 – URBAN & REGIONAL GEOSPATIAL ANALYSIS (M)

“Principles of GIS applied to problems in urban design and planning, landscape architecture, and environmental and resource studies. Practical problem-solving approaches using contemporary desktop mapping packages and vector and raster GIS systems. Siting, environmental evaluation and inventories, and modeling.”

In the world of planning, simply having introductory knowledge of GIS is not enough to be successful in your endeavors. This course helped me gain more specific knowledge of how urban planners use GIS in the real world.

SPRING 2017

CEP 303 – SOCIAL STRUCTURES AND PROCESSES

“Investigates use of formal and informal social structures and processes within context of community and environment. Looks at patterns and institutions of social organization and relationships among different sectors. Issues of interrelatedness, citizenship, knowledge, and communication.”

Having already had some real-world planning experience under my belt through the planning practicum I had taken the quarter before, I was excited to learn more about the subject. This course offered a perspective on planning from a more societal lens.

URBDP 300 – INTRODUCTION TO URBAN PLANNING (M)

“Principles and theories of urban structure and institutions. Concepts and logic of planning as a community process and a professional activity. Evolution of planning ideas in response to changing social, economic, and environmental conditions within the American political framework. Complementary nature of public and private responsibilities. Major procedures used by planners.”

This course was required for the Urban Design and Planning minor. I found this to be a very comprehensive overview of how the profession of planning has evolved and what it is today.

CEP 498 – PLANNING PRACTICUM (M)

“The course is a practicum... Each student will be assigned to one project group which will conduct a variety of tasks including: data analysis; planning and design at the city, neighborhood, and site scale; public engagement; report writing and public presentations. Work products will be completed by each group through the efforts of its team members.”

I was so happy with the work I was able to do in the previous quarter’s planning practicum class that I decided to participate in it again, hoping to gain even more experience in the field of planning.

FALL 2017

CEP 460 – PLANNING IN CONTEXT

“Examines theory against backdrop of practice for broad historical understanding of social, political, environmental planning. Critique from viewpoints, e.g., planning history, ethics, ecofeminism, environmental justice, class and capitalism, planning and global economy. Develop personalized history reflecting individual experience, professional experience, and philosophical heritage of planning profession.”

This course allowed me to apply my interest in videography in a planning context. My team produced a video for the City of Tacoma that introduced and summarized the purpose and value of their comprehensive plan. The experience I gained from this class would help me to produce my own video for my senior project.

CEP 490 – SENIOR PROJECT PREP SEMINAR I

“Supports the conceptualization and planning of senior project/capstone work. Focuses on selecting a project, beginning a literature review, finding a mentor, and developing a plan.”

This weekly seminar helped me start to think about what I wanted to do for my senior project. I decided on making a video, but since I wanted my senior project to relate to my career goal, which was still urban planning at the time, I didn't let myself get too excited about this project until next quarter when my career goal shifted to film.

URBDP 450 – INTRO TO LAND USE, GROWTH MANAGEMENT & ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING (M)

“Provides an understanding of contemporary land use issues (including sprawl, smart growth, new urbanism, transit-oriented development, and Washington's Growth Management Act) and examines their environmental impact and social welfare implications. Analyzes best-practice techniques of growth management.”

This course helped me gain more a more comprehensive understanding of growth management in the field of urban planning, especially in the context of Seattle and the state of Washington's Growth Management Act.

FALL 2017 (cont.)

CEP 446 – INTERNSHIP

“Connects core and individual courses with field work. Group and individual readings develop understanding of how students' internships and field placements constitute particular element of community and environmental planning. Explores how what we do for a living is part of our lives as citizens and public service.”

This course provided a good space to reflect on my SDOT internship experience with my fellow peers and tie it back to the CEP curriculum. I remember some of the discussion revolving around the kind of lives we wanted to live in relationship to our careers, and it started to get me thinking about whether or not I actually wanted to end up in planning.

WINTER 2018

CEP 461 – ETHICS AND IDENTITY

“Examination of personal, societal, vocational, environmental, planning ethics. Readings and discourse on ethical foundations for public life. Individual and group readings on values, human potential. Develops understanding of ecological context, moral responsibility, self-awareness. Constructs positive, diverse view of humanity, environment regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, beliefs.”

This was without question the most influential CEP class for me. At a time when I was questioning whether planning was what I wanted to do for the rest of my life, being introduced to philosophies and ideas about the values in our lives and how we make decisions ultimately helped me make the decision to change my career path from urban planning to something I had been passionate about my entire life, and that was film.

CEP 491 – SENIOR PROJECT PREP SEMINAR II

“Focuses on implementing the senior project/capstone, including revisions and updates as seen fit.”

Mid-way through the quarter, I had a revelation to pursue my passion in film. It was at this point that my senior project and career goals finally lined up, and I grew excited about creating a video that would not only serve the major, but also serve as a stepping stone for me towards applying to film school.

GEOG 123 – INTRO TO GLOBALIZATION (D)

“Provides an introduction to the debates over globalization. Focuses on the growth and intensification of global ties. Addresses the resulting inequalities and tensions, as well as the new opportunities for cultural and political exchange. Topics include the impacts on government, finance, labor, culture, the environment, health, and activism.”

This online class helped give me a better understanding of the world as a truly interconnected system and taught me a lot about transnational corporations and how they have an impact our everyday lives. I initially took this course just to satisfy UW’s diversity requirement, but I ultimately found this to be one of the most rewarding classes I had ever taken.

SPRING 2018

CEP 462 – COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT

“Capstone quarter merges core seminars, disciplinary courses in major, community field experiences for mastery of personal knowledge and skills. Reflection and synthesis of themes in major; engagement with contemporary issues. Compares theoretical definitions of community and environment with individual philosophies and knowledge within thoughtful, applied context.”

Having committed myself to pursuing film, I decided to dedicate the entire quarter towards working on my senior project as well as other video projects outside of CEP. Outside of all the work that went into my project and getting it ready for Senior Project Night, I found that I was able to make some truly strong relationships with some of my fellow peers through the shared struggles we had with our projects. Together, we supported each other through the difficulties and challenges that came with our projects, and through overcoming those struggles, I felt as if we grew closer as a cohort.

VISUAL MAP OF COURSE OVERVIEW

CEP Year 1							
AUTUMN		WINTER		SPRING		SUMMER	
Course	Credit	Course	Credit	Course	Credit	Course	Credit
CEP 301	5	CEP 302	5	CEP 303	5		
CEP 300	1	CEP 400	1	CEP 300	1		
CEP 400	1	URBDP 422	5	CEP 400	1		
URBDP 404	3	URBDP 498	5	URBDP 300	5		
URBDP 405	3			CEP 498	3		
URBDP 480	1						
Quarter total:	14	Quarter total:	16	Quarter total:	15	Quarter total:	0

CEP Year 2							
AUTUMN		WINTER		SPRING		SUMMER	
Course	Credit	Course	Credit	Course	Credit	Course	Credit
CEP 460	5	CEP 461	5	CEP 462	5		
CEP 300	1	CEP 400	1	CEP 300	1		
CEP 400	1	CEP 491	3	CEP 400	1		
CEP 490	1	GEOG 123	5				
URBDP 450	3						
CEP 446	5						
Quarter total:	16	Quarter total:	14	Quarter total:	7	Quarter total:	0
TOTAL CREDITS							82

KEY
CEP Core Required Courses
Methods Credits
Diversity & Internship

INTERNSHIP

SEATTLE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

My original goal for the summer between my junior and senior years of college was to find an internship within the field of urban planning, preferably focused on transportation. David Blum's Planning as a Profession course had been incredibly eye opening to me with regard the potential opportunities that were out there in the field, and I felt that my experience having done numerous interviews before would have helped me find what was looking for. I was hoping to gain professional, real world experience in the field of urban planning that would have not only supplement my studies here at the University of Washington, but also helped in making the transition from school to career much easier.

Indeed, I was able to find all of these things after interning at the Seattle Department of Transportation for nine months, but perhaps the most important thing I learned was that planning, at least in the public sector, was not for me. While the work was interesting, I was never able to get myself to feel truly excited about what I was doing or even the things I could be doing if I was perhaps a more experienced planner. Still, looking back on those nine months, I appreciate the opportunity that I was given to work for the City of Seattle. I see every experience that I go through in life, both positive and negative, as valuable learning experiences that make me who I am today, and although I'm no longer pursuing urban planning as my career, I feel the same way about my time as an intern for the Seattle Department of Transportation.

EXTRACURRICULARS

ALPHA KAPPA PSI

Alpha Kappa Psi is a professional business fraternity which focuses on brotherhood and professional development. Aside from CEP, AKPsi has been the most personally influential organization that I have been a part of here at the University of Washington. Looking back at my time in college, I find it hard to remember what my life was like before joining AKPsi. When I think about college and the University of Washington, I think about the strong social and professional network that I have developed through AKPsi. On top of that, AKPsi has provided me with a comfortable space and medium to develop my leadership skills and practice my passions of film and videography. I have seen many parallels between the structures of both CEP and AKPsi. Both are of similar size, have specialized committees, and are for the most part student-run. But best of all, they both allow students and members a safe space to develop their interests and grow as individuals among a community of others that support one another through the challenges and struggles that we all face.

As an older, graduating member of AKPsi, I have found it rewarding to be able to give back to the chapter and offer my advice to the younger members just as older members before did for me. I feel like the path to finding my career has been unordinary, so I hope that I can offer my support and advice to others that might be finding themselves going through a similar situation.

SENIOR PROJECT

Now that Senior Project Night has come and gone, it's interesting to look back and see just how far I've come from first having to come up with ideas almost two years ago.

Transportation had long been one of my favorite areas of curiosity and being in a region plagued with heavy congestion and incredible population growth, I couldn't think of a better topic to study for my senior project at the time.

Some ideas I had were to do an independent study on the feasibility of an East-West Ballard to UW Light Rail line, as well as the potential for a tunnel between Sandpoint and Kirkland to connect with the system on the Eastside.

Another, rather ambitious, idea that I had was inspired by SimCity 4. It was to create a City of Seattle trip database that would allow for a user to click on a road, bus line, bike path, and see how many people are using it, where they're coming from, and where they're going. Using a rough estimate on the cost of the 2010 US Census (~\$42/capita) and the projected population of Seattle (~700,000), I estimated that project like this would cost upwards of 30 million dollars!



As I come to the end of my time here in CEP, I believe making a video for my senior project was the best decision I could have made, but perhaps these old ideas can still serve a purpose as inspiration for future CEP students.