

POLS/PLAN 3704: CITY PLANNING RESEARCH METHODS

Tuesday/Thursday 12:30-1:45 Pafford 112 Prerequisites: None

City planning research methods focus on the analytical skills necessary to understand complex socioeconomic systems, including government, business, and society-at-large, and how to use this knowledge as a basis for effective public and private sector decision-making.

Planning research methods include the statistical analysis of demographic, economic, population and housing, and other data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, the U.S. and state Departments of Health, Labor, and Transportation, and many other important sources. This course is designed to help planners, business persons, employees of social service agencies, grant writers, and others, analyze these data to make persuasive arguments to win support for funding new and existing programs and projects.

Students who develop skills in planning research methods find jobs in local, state and federal governments, with non-profit groups, and with private consultants including marketing and real estate development companies. Planners knowledgeable in research methods are valuable to employers from day one and have an important edge when seeking work, particularly at the entry level. Planners with research and data analysis skills address issues such as the following:

How can planners use publicly available information and data to better plan for new public and private investment?

How can we identify key industries in our local economy and target them for investment?

How do we identify the important population, housing, and employment trends that drive the need for local public infrastructure?

How can we plan better neighborhoods and livable communities?

How can planners combine research methods and effective presentation techniques to create better Comprehensive Development Plans for city and county governments?

How can we use data analysis to write winning grant proposals to federal and state governments?

Questions? Email Dr. Mitch Moody at mmoody@westga.edu.