

# Housing Policy – Preliminary Syllabus<sup>1</sup>, Winter Quarter 2015 (4 credits)

**Special Expenses:** Approx. \$45 for text: Alex F. Schwartz, Housing Policy in the United States; Third Edition<sup>2</sup>, Routledge, ISBN 978 0 415 83650 0 (pbk). Case studies and additional readings will be provided electronically. **Instructor:** Stephen Buxbaum, email: [buxbaums@evergreen.edu](mailto:buxbaums@evergreen.edu)

## Description:

This course explores the historical evolution of federal, state and local housing policy. Drawing from this rich history, which is deeply intertwined with the evolution of the American welfare state, students will learn about how analytical and political frameworks are used to create, evaluate and shape programs, projects and services. We will examine the continuum of subsidies and programs that are provided to everyone from high income earners and investors to people who are chronically homeless. We will examine how specific programs, such as Washington State's Housing Trust Fund, were established and how they have served to create affordable housing. We will compare and contrast how different housing policies are used to provide shelter, stimulate the economy, protect the environment and support sustainable growth. The content and context of this class is housing policy, with additional focus and attention given to a practitioner's perspective as to how community and economic development policy is shaped and implemented.

## Learning Objectives:

- Investigate how political and social conditions shaped the development of local, state and federal housing programs and policies.
- Examine the role non-profit and public administrators play in determining how resources are deployed in support of housing policy objectives.
- Explore how the goals of *equity*, *efficiency* and *security* are used to shape and justify housing programs, projects and services.
- Consider how housing resource allocation decisions are made using policy frameworks and concepts that assess need, capacity, agreement and performance.

## Methods and Assignments

We will draw from readings, case studies, films and internet resources as we work together to intensively review how housing policy objectives are established and implemented. Class sessions will be interactive, combining presentations by the instructor and guests with seminar style discussions and one or more visits to local public housing projects. Please check your academic/work/life schedules to be certain you can participate fully at every class. **There is no option for partial credit or an incomplete.** Students will provide a short paragraph addressing their background and interests relative to the course material to be shared verbally during the first class and provided in advance by email to Stephen no later than COB Monday, January 26<sup>th</sup>. Students are required to complete a short paper (three to five pages) due Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup> by email to Stephen.

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<sup>1</sup> Our Canvas sight will have the most up to date information on schedules and assignments. Look for Canvas availability by January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

<sup>2</sup> NOTE: Please make certain to procure a *third edition* copy of this book.

## **Housing Policy Credit Requirements (4 credits)**

For credit in this class, students are required to:

1. Complete all the assigned readings.
2. Attend all evening (6 to 10 p.m.) and weekend (9 a.m. to 5 p.m.) classes, February 6 – 8 and February 20 – 22.
3. Actively participate in class discussions, exercises and triad/seminar team work.
4. Complete all written assignments – including worksheets to be completed during classroom exercises and seminars. Evaluation sheets will be provided to students and are to be completed and turned in at the end of each class.
5. All students are required to complete a short paper evaluating a housing program, project or service of the student's choice. Papers should incorporate lessons learned from class discussions, instructor presentations and reading. Papers must be emailed to Stephen by Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup>.
6. Consistent with MPA program requirements, students will prepare a self-evaluation and an evaluation of the instructor. Students should include in their self evaluation at least one important lesson or idea that has influenced their thinking relative to the course's learning objectives. Student/faculty evaluations are to be completed via email exchange using the college's electronic evaluation system and in keeping with the college's established evaluation deadlines.

MPA Standards of Conduct: *Having respect for others is fundamental to an open, free, and educational dialogue. All students are expected to support and contribute to a well functioning MPA classroom learning community. Behavior that disrupts the learning community may be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the MPA program. All students will be held accountable for maintaining the highest of academic standards – plagiarism will result in a full loss of credit for the class.*

### **About the Instructor:**

Stephen Buxbaum has more than thirty years of management experience in the non-profit and public sectors focusing on community and economic development programs and policy. His background includes extensive work on farmland preservation, sustainable agriculture and water conservation beginning in the 1970's and '80's. He has worked at local, state and federal levels of government both in Washington State and Washington, D.C. As an executive manager for the state of Washington, he oversaw financing of hundreds of affordable housing, community facilities and public works projects. During his career he has managed some of Washington State's most successful grant and loan programs, including the Housing Trust Fund and the Community Development Block Grant program. In 2005, he received a fellowship to attend Harvard University's program for senior executives in state and local government. In 2006, he was appointed to chair the Governor's Interagency Council on Homelessness. Now, in addition to managing his consulting business, he teaches part-time for Evergreen's Masters of Public Administration Program. In November 2009 he was elected to serve on Olympia, Washington's City Council. He was elected by his peers to serve as Olympia's Mayor Pro Tem (Deputy Mayor) from April 2010 to December 2011. He was elected Mayor of Olympia in the 2011 General Election and assumed office on January 3, 2012 (term ending December 31, 2015).

## **Housing Policy (4 credits) - Winter Quarter, 2015 Preliminary Daily Schedule**

Final Syllabus and Canvas access will be provided to registered students the week of January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

**Note About Enrollment:** I limit enrollment for all of my classes to 15 students. Please review the following general schedule to make certain that it fits with your own personal/professional activities. I often have a wait list for my classes – which I carefully monitor. It's very common for there to be a couple student turnover during the first week of the quarter. Please don't hesitate to email me if you have questions.

### **Monday, January 26 - Pre-class work assignment:**

Write a short paragraph (*no more than one page*) describing your background and interests relative to the course material. Email due to Stephen by close of business on January 26 (additional instructions will be available on Canvas).

### **Friday, February 6, 6-10 p.m.**

Introductions, subject overview and expectations presented by instructor. Instructor presentation: Defining terms and becoming familiar with the landscape of policy frameworks and the history of housing policy. Short seminar covering assigned reading (Alex Schwartz, [Housing Policy in the United States](#); Chapters 1 and 2).

Assignment handed out in class: short paragraph to be reviewed in preparation of seminar discussion on February 7<sup>th</sup>.

### **Saturday and Sunday, February 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 9a.m to 5 p.m.**

Instructor presentations and class discussion on: 1) Authorizing environments, 2) practical guide to framing policy and, 3) policy goals: equity, efficiency and security. Guest presentation about the politics of Washington State's budget process relative to housing investments is scheduled for this weekend along with a possible field trip. Instructions will be provided for completing the short paper assignment due on Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup>.

Reading to be completed: Schwartz, Chapters 3 through 7.

**PLEASE NOTE:** topics and timeframes may change to accommodate the scheduling of guest speakers and site visits with local housing providers. All case studies will be available electronically to class participants on Canvas.

**Assignment due Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup>** to Stephen via email: Three to five page analysis of a housing program, project or service of the student's choosing.

### **Friday, February 20, 6-9 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, February 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup>, 9a.m. to 5p.m.**

Reading to be completed: remainder of Schwartz, Chapters 8 through 14. The weekend will include instructor and guest presentations about Washington State's housing programs, class seminar on reading and short presentations by students of their paper topics. A site visit to housing providers in Thurston County is planned for this weekend. We will also be taking a field trip through one of Olympia's neighborhoods.

**Please note:** there is quite a bit of reading and one very short assignment that is due before the first Friday evening class. Students are required to use Canvas and email for assignments and distribution of class materials - including case studies.