

# FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY™

## Graduate Programs—NEW COURSE PROPOSAL<sup>1</sup>

UGPC APPROVAL \_\_\_\_\_  
 UFS APPROVAL \_\_\_\_\_  
 SCNS SUBMITTAL \_\_\_\_\_  
 CONFIRMED \_\_\_\_\_  
 BANNER POSTED \_\_\_\_\_  
 CATALOG \_\_\_\_\_

DEPARTMENT  
SCHOOL OF URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING

COLLEGE  
COLLEGE FOR DESIGN AND SOCIAL INQUIRY

RECOMMENDED COURSE IDENTIFICATION (TO OBTAIN A COURSE NUMBER, CONTACT [NMALDONADO@FAU.EDU](mailto:NMALDONADO@FAU.EDU))

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

PREFIX URP COURSE NUMBER 6971 LAB CODE (L or C) C

(first term course will be offered)

COMPLETE COURSE TITLE:

FALL 2016

MASTER'S THESIS

CREDITS<sup>2</sup>  
3 (IN EACH OF  
TWO SEMESTERS)

TEXTBOOK INFORMATION  
NONE

GRADING (SELECT ONLY ONE GRADING OPTION): REGULAR X SATISFACTORY/UNSATISFACTORY \_\_\_\_\_

COURSE DESCRIPTION, NO MORE THAN THREE LINES:

MASTER'S THESIS FOR PLANNING STUDENTS WHO ARE INTERESTED IN RESEARCH CAREERS AND FURTHER STUDY AT THE DOCTORAL LEVEL. TO BE REPEATED FOR A TOTAL OF 6 CREDITS.

PREREQUISITES\*  
24 CREDITS TOWARD THE MURP  
DEGREE

COREQUISITES\*

REGISTRATION CONTROLS (MAJOR, COLLEGE, LEVEL)\*  
MASTER OF URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING STUDENTS  
ONLY.

\* PREREQUISITES, COREQUISITES AND REGISTRATION CONTROLS WILL BE ENFORCED FOR ALL COURSE SECTIONS.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS NEEDED TO TEACH THIS COURSE:

MEMBER OF THE GRADUATE FACULTY OF FAU AND HAS A TERMINAL DEGREE IN THE SUBJECT AREA (OR A CLOSELY RELATED FIELD).

Faculty contact, email and complete phone number:  
Steven Bourassa, Director, School of Urban and  
Regional Planning, sbourassa@fau.edu, (561)  
297-4164

Please consult and list departments that might be affected by the new course and attach  
comments.<sup>3</sup>  
None

<p><b>Approved by:</b>                  Department Chair: <u>Steven C Bourassa</u>  <small>Digitally signed by Steven C Bourassa DN: cn=Steven C Bourassa, o=Florida Atlantic University, ou=School of Urban and Regional Planning, email=sbourassa@fau.edu, c=US Date: 2016.02.23 14:40:15 -0500</small></p> <p>College Curriculum Chair: _____</p> <p>College Dean: <u>Wesley Hawkins</u>  <small>Digitally signed by Wesley Hawkins DN: cn=Wesley Hawkins, o=Florida Atlantic University, email=whawkins@fau.edu Date: 2016.02.25 16:33:17 -0500</small></p> <p>UGPC Chair: _____</p> <p>Graduate College Dean: _____</p> <p>UFS President: _____</p> <p>Provost: _____</p>	<p><b>Date:</b>                  _____                  _____                  _____                  _____                  _____                  _____</p>	<p><b>1. Syllabus</b> must be attached; see guidelines for requirements:  <a href="http://www.fau.edu/provost/files/course_syllabus.2011.pdf">www.fau.edu/provost/files/course_syllabus.2011.pdf</a></p> <p><b>2. Review Provost Memorandum: Definition of a Credit Hour</b>  <a href="http://www.fau.edu/provost/files/Definition_Credit_Hour_Memo_2012.pdf">www.fau.edu/provost/files/Definition_Credit_Hour_Memo_2012.pdf</a></p> <p><b>3. Consent</b> from affected departments (attach if necessary)</p>
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Email this form and syllabus to [UGPC@fau.edu](mailto:UGPC@fau.edu) one week before the University Graduate Programs Committee meeting.

**School of Urban and Regional Planning  
College for Design and Social Inquiry  
Florida Atlantic University**

**Syllabus  
URP 6971 Master's Thesis  
Fall 2016/Spring 2017**

Credit hours: 3 credits in each of two semesters  
Student: [name]  
Thesis Chair: [name]  
Committee Members: [two names]  
Location: [of Thesis Chair's office]  
Office Hours: [Chair's office hours]  
Email: [Chair's and student's email addresses]  
Phone: [Chair's and student's phone number]

***Course Objectives***

The School of Urban and Regional Planning offers master's-level students an opportunity to prepare and defend a master's thesis. This option is intended mainly for students wishing to continue on to a Ph.D. program at FAU or elsewhere. It requires supervision by a three-person committee with graduate faculty status. One of the three faculty members will work directly with the student and is considered the Thesis Chair.

Although the course is unlike a traditional course in that it does not involve specific meeting times on certain days, the Student is required to devote just as much (if not more) time in conducting independent research. While the topics explored in the thesis will vary from student to student, the general course objectives include:

- identifying research in relevant field;
- analyzing scholarly literature and summarizing findings from large bodies of research;
- working closely with the Thesis Chair in the development of the research topic, research questions, data collection and analysis, and preparation of the final thesis according to the university guidelines; and
- conducting high quality, original, independent research.

***Prerequisite***

The student must have completed at least 24 credits toward the master's degree and should be in the final two semesters of his or her program before enrolling to complete the thesis. The student should consult with both the Thesis Chair and the MURP Program Coordinator before enrolling in the thesis credits to ensure all requirements have been met. Given the difficulty of completing a thesis, the student should consider:

- whether a significant amount of time can be invested in the research;
- whether self-directed project of this nature is realistic; and

- the risk of not being able to successfully complete and defend the thesis in the semester just before graduation.

### ***Required Text and Readings***

The student will work closely with his or her Thesis Chair to identify relevant literature in the field. These sources may include edited scholarly books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and other empirical work. Although the Thesis Chair will provide guidance about scholarly resources to consult, the student is responsible for identifying and securing literature relevant to his or her research questions.

### ***Course Requirements and Policies***

Generally, the student will work closely with the Thesis Chair in producing a research plan, (see “Thesis Orientation, Research Plan, and Preparation”) and well as carrying out the literature review and research itself. The Thesis Chair will continually evaluate the student’s progress throughout the process and will offer feedback periodically throughout the thesis period (note that this period may be one or even two semesters which should be determined before thesis credits are taken).

The student will enroll in 3 credit hours of URP 6XXX Master’s Thesis in each of the final two semesters of his or her course of study. The first semester of work on the Master’s Thesis will be devoted to developing a detailed research proposal including a literature review. Human subjects training and applications for approval of projects involving human subjects will be completed if required. The second semester of work will involve completing and defending the Thesis and making any revisions required by the Thesis Committee.

At any point during the thesis process, if any work is deemed unsatisfactory, the Thesis Chair will notify the student in writing and will propose a course of action to improve the quality of the student’s work.

The defense of the thesis should be at least three weeks in advance of any University deadlines for submission of the final thesis. Logging sufficient hours while enrolled in the thesis course(s) does not guarantee that the student will successfully complete the thesis. The Student will orally defend the thesis on an agreed upon date and time with the Thesis Chair along with the student’s two other Thesis Committee Members. The committee will have reviewed the thesis before the defense and along with determining whether the student passes or fails the defense will recommend changes and revisions for the final draft, if necessary (see Thesis Defense for more details).

The student is ultimately responsible for monitoring his or her own progress and ensuring that he or she meets all University, College, and School deadlines in the oral defense and submission of their thesis.

### ***Thesis Orientation, Research Plan, and Preparation***

Within one week of the start of the thesis process, the student is responsible for attending an orientation with the Thesis Chair. The purpose of this meeting is to ensure the student is aware of the School’s policies and procedures regarding successful completion of the thesis. Before the meeting, the student will send the Thesis Chair with a written research topic and plan of data collection and analysis. In the meeting, the Thesis Chair and the student will finalize the topic and research plan and develop a schedule for carrying out the research. The student should bring into the meeting a possible schedule

based on the deadlines listed on the Graduate College website for submitting the final product to the university.

The Thesis Chair will evaluate the research plan to ensure it is based upon comprehensiveness and level of critical thinking in the literature review, persuasiveness of the rationale for the study, readability, feasibility of the study, relevance to urban and regional planning, and accurate application of research methods. The student will make any changes requested by the Thesis Chair as soon as possible so that the research plan is completed early in the first semester.

From there, the student is responsible for preparing the detailed research proposal, including literature review, preparing the human subjects application for submission to the IRB, scheduling necessary meetings with the Thesis Chair for feedback and research assistance, and ensuring that the research proposal is completed and available to the Thesis Committee for review prior to the end of the first semester of Master's Thesis.

Once the Thesis Committee approves the detailed research proposal (and any required IRB approvals are obtained), then the student can continue with the research in the second semester of Master's Thesis. Again, the student is responsible for meeting all deadlines and that the thesis is available to the Thesis Committee in a timely manner in advance of the defense.

### ***Thesis Defense***

At least three weeks in advance of any University deadlines for submission of the final thesis, the student will schedule with the three person committee a time and day to orally defend the thesis. Once the student has completed the final draft of the thesis, it will be submitted into the anti-plagiarism software on Blackboard, two to three weeks before the oral defense date for the three Committee Members to review.

During the defense, the student will present the major themes and findings of his or her work in about 30 to 45 minutes. The student will then answer critical and evaluative questions posed by the Thesis Committee members about the presentation and the thesis itself. The oral defense may last up to two hours.

Once the defense is over, the student will leave the room and the Committee will immediately decide and notify the student whether she or he has passed with no revisions, passed with minor revisions, passed with major revisions, or failed the oral defense. Depending on the result, the student will take the appropriate action with consultation of the Thesis Chair and according to Graduate College policies. The student is responsible for securing the proper paperwork and submitting the forms to the Graduate College.

### ***Grading Scale***

Each semester of Master's Thesis will be awarded a grade of A, A-, B+, B, or F based on the judgment of the Thesis Chair with advice from the Thesis Committee.

### ***Statement on Academic Dishonesty***

Students at Florida Atlantic University are expected to maintain the highest ethical standards. Academic dishonesty is considered a serious breach of these ethical standards, because it interferes with the university mission to provide a high quality education in which no student enjoys an unfair advantage over any other. Academic dishonesty is also destructive of the university community, which is grounded in a system of mutual trust and places high value on personal integrity and individual responsibility. Harsh penalties are associated with academic dishonesty. For more information, see University Regulation 4.001.

### **Student Accessibility Services**

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), students who require special accommodation due to a disability to properly execute course work must register with the Student Accessibility Services (SAS)—in Boca Raton, SU 133 (561-297-3880); in Davie, LA 131 (954-236-1222); or in Jupiter, SR 110 (561-799-8585)—and follow all SAS procedures (see <http://www.fau.edu/sas/> for procedures and forms).

### **Student Success Resources**

If you are having problems, see your instructor during office hours or contact your instructor via email. It is imperative that you contact your professor early in the term if you are having problems with this course. Do not wait until the end of the term to seek assistance. If you need individualized help or tutoring in reading, writing, taking notes, or other academic issues, please see one of the help centers listed below:

UNIVERSITY CENTER FOR EXCELLENCE IN WRITING  
<http://www.fau.edu/UCEW/WC/>

LEARNING COMMUNITY  
<http://www.fau.edu/class/LearningCommunity/>

TUTORING, STUDY HELP, & ACADEMIC SUPPORT  
<http://www.fau.edu/ctl/TutoringStudyHelpAndAcademicSupportStudentResources.php>

CENTER FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUCCESS  
<http://www.fau.edu/CLASS/>

CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTER  
<http://www.fau.edu/cdc/>

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT AND LEADERSHIP  
<http://www.fau.edu/sil/>

If you are having personal problems and need guidance or help, please contact one of the centers listed below:

OFFICE OF HEALTH AND WELLNESS  
<http://www.fau.edu/wellness/index.php>  
<http://www.fau.edu/wellness/staff.php>

**COUNSELING CENTER**

<http://www.fau.edu/counseling/>

**STUDENT INTERVENTION TEAM**

<http://www.fau.edu/studentsindistress/index.php>

<http://www.fau.edu/studentsindistress/aboutus.php>

<http://www.fau.edu/studentsindistress/SITrole.php>

**STUDENT CRISIS AWARENESS COMMITTEE**

<http://www.fau.edu/studentsindistress/SCACROLE.php>

***Syllabus subject to change!***