

HOT BUTTON TOPICS IN CULTURAL POLICY

PPHA 39703

Winter 2015

Instructors: Anne Dodge

Tuesdays 3:00-5:50 p.m.

Harris 224

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Course Overview:

This course offers students the opportunity to engage in real-world cultural policy research focused on some of the most pressing issues affecting the cultural sector. In winter 2015 our “hot button” topic is the emerging field of creative placemaking.

The term “placemaking” has come to represent a variety of interventions in the built and cultural landscape. People use the term placemaking to mean just about anything, from the development of cultural facilities to the staging of a temporary artistic performance in a specific location. But with the emergence of **creative placemaking** as both a practice and a field of research, a set of existing and anticipated projects have found a way to define and market themselves to a growing community of funders, participants, and advocates. So what are we talking about when we talk about “creative placemaking”? Who is using this term, and when? What makes this emerging field different from the fields of public art, community-based art, urban planning, or economic development?

The first half of the course will focus on defining our terms and familiarizing ourselves with the field and its major players. We'll begin the course by looking at the recent policy literature about creative placemaking and teasing out what the term means in both theory and practice. We'll then look at examples of creative placemaking projects, with an eye toward the impact of public policy and the tools of government action. We'll also discuss how these projects are being evaluated. Finally, we'll look at the conditions necessary for a successful creative placemaking project, so that students can effectively work with clients to analyze the potential for creative placemaking with two separate Chicago-based clients.

The second half of the course will be group work with a real world client. Students will collaborate on a report to one or two clients that outlines the potential for creative placemaking in either or both of these two projects: the **45th Ward Alderman's office** in Portage Park and the **National Public Housing Museum** in Little Italy.

The first client, the 45th Ward, is a neighborhood working from the ground up to leverage its creative assets in conjunction with Chicago's Cultural Plan. The second client is a cultural institution in development, trying to position itself as a contributor to the creative life of a neighborhood with a complex cultural identity. Both clients would like to take advantage of the "creative placemaking" movement and its potential for creating public, private, and governmental support. Rather than proposing specific creative placemaking projects, the students' role will be to analyze the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to creative placemaking work in these two contexts.

Course Organization and Requirements:

The course is organized into three sections: an orientation to creative placemaking, a discussion of how it is practiced, and a report on the creative placemaking potential of two real-life projects.

Some of the work for this class will be individually based, and some will be collective—the former primarily in the seminar sessions during the first few weeks of the quarter and the latter in the team-based research assignments during the remaining weeks. Research will involve multiple methodologies, including traditional library and online literature searches and interviews, as well as site visits.

This course combines reading and discussion of public policy with the application of policy ideas. During the client-based part of the course, students will need to work together to schedule interviews, site visits, and collaborative writing/research.

Resources:

Readings for the course are listed (with links) on the syllabus by week, or on Chalk under Course Documents. After the first four weeks of seminar readings and discussion, the class syllabus will be developed around the ongoing research projects. If any circumstances arise during the quarter that require an update to the syllabus, the latest version of the syllabus will always be posted to Chalk/Syllabus and students will be notified of the update.

Assignments & Evaluation

Individual Assignments & Evaluation (50% of final grade for PPHA 39703)

- For the first half of the course, students must **post three questions** each week in response to the readings assigned for that week. These should be posted by Monday morning (the day before class.) No two questions should be alike, so if someone has already posted something close to your question, you'll need to think of a new one. A selection of these questions will guide our seminar discussions. Questions will be evaluated on how well they reflect your understanding of the reading and how effective they are in generating meaningful in-class discussion (20%)
- A **5-page paper** comparing and contrasting three case studies (20%)
- Preparation for and active participation in weekly seminar meetings (10%)

Group Assignments & Evaluation (50% of final grade for PPHA 39703)

- Individual stakeholder interview and transcription (10%)
- Detailed outline of your group report (10%)
- A final 20-page report suitable for presentation to a client, as well as a slideshow summarizing your report. Our last class will be a presentation of the report/s to the client and each other (20%)
- A short statement about your own and your teammates' contributions to this assignment (10%)

COURSE SYLLABUS

WEEK 1, Tuesday, January 6: Welcome and Course Overview

Orientation to course content, structure, and project goals. What are we talking about when we talk about "creative placemaking"? What are the components of creative placemaking? What fields does it draw from?

For THIS week:

Fallon, Michael, "An Arts Funding Revolution," Public Art Review, Issue 47

Readings for next week:

- Markusen and Gadwa, "Creative Placemaking"
- NEA Arts, "Arts and Culture at the Core; A Look at Creative Placemaking"
- <http://www.pps.org/blog/> (Project for Public Spaces blog)
- Borrup, Tom, "Artists and Creativity in Urban Placemaking"
- Silberberg, "Places In the Making" MIT

Additional (Optional) Readings for the Whole Course:

Florida, Richard (2002) The rise of the creative class: And how it's transforming work, leisure, community and everyday life. New York, NY: Basic Books.

Goldbard, Arlene. New Creative Community: the Art of Cultural Development. Oakland, CA: New Village Press, 2006

Jacobs, Jane. The Death and Life of Great American Cities. New York, NY: Vintage, 1961

Nowak, Jeremy. Creativity and Neighborhood Development: Strategies for Community Investment. Philadelphia, PA: The

Reinvestment Fund (TRF), December 2007.

WEEK 2, Tuesday, January 13: What Is Creative Placemaking?

We'll look at the (relatively recent) history of the term "creative placemaking." What factors led to the growth of the term "placemaking," and now *creative* placemaking? To the extent that we can define an emerging field, what defines a creative placemaking project? How do these projects differ from community arts work? Economic development? Planning? Public interest (aka participatory) design?

Readings for next week:

- Nicodemus, Ann Gadwa, "Fuzzy Vibrancy: Creative Placemaking as Ascendant US Cultural Policy"
- Grodach, "Arts Spaces in Community and Economic Development"
- Stern and Seifert, "Cultural Clusters: The Implications of Cultural Assets Agglomeration for Neighborhood Revitalization"
- Americans for the Arts, "Arts and Economic Prosperity IV, Summary Report"
- Zukin, Sharon, "The Life Cycle of New York's Unplanned Creative Districts"

Assignment:

Instead of questions, choose three case studies from <http://arts.gov/exploring-our-town/showcase>, and write a 4 to 5 page paper that analyzes the role of policy in each project. Think broadly about policy, including not only planning tools like regulations and zoning, but subtler tools like design review, incentives, and information. (20% of your grade)

WEEK 3, Tuesday, January 20: Policy, Social Justice, and Economic Impact

There are countless forces at work in a placemaking project, and every stakeholder has her own interpretation of which forces are responsible for which outcomes. So, what policy tools are currently in use to encourage creative placemaking? What market forces are in action? And is it the responsibility of policy makers and advocates to implement tools for social and economic justice in the course of these projects?

We'll begin discussion by teasing out the public policy around placemaking. We'll also look at criticism of "creative placemaking" by artists and advocates.

Readings for next week:

- Vazquez, Leonardo, "Creative Placemaking: Integrating Community, Cultural, and Economic Development."
- NEA Our Town grant requirements and Arts Place America grant requirements (pay special attention to deliverables.)
<http://arts.gov/exploring-our-town/insights/process>
- <http://www.artplaceamerica.org/articles/principles-of-creative-placemaking/>
- Tuscon Pima Arts Council, "People, Land, Arts, Culture, and Engagement: Taking Stock of the PLACE Initiative"
- Moss, Ian David, "Creative Placemaking Has an Outcomes Problem"

Assignment:

- Posted questions this week will be directed toward the E.D. of Arts Place America, who will be skyped in to class discussion next week.

WEEK 4, Tuesday, January 27: Evaluation and Process

What makes a successful project, and what makes a failure? How do different entities set the terms for success, and how much of the ability to define success lies with the project-makers? How do we talk about failures? How do we learn from the range of outcomes we see?

Once you've defined success, how does a community or organization begin a placemaking project? What are the preconditions for success? This is where our conversation about our final project begins, as we will be tasked with analyzing the likelihood of "success" for our potential clients.

In-class skype with director of Art Place America to discuss the challenges of evaluation.

Readings for next week:

- TBD readings about our two potential clients, 6 Corners and the NPHM (feasibility study for NPHM and Economic Development Plan 2011 for 6 Corners, as well as other background material)

WEEK 5, Tuesday, February 3: Choosing a Client

In class today, we'll form groups to work with our two clients and organize a site visit. To make this decision, we will discuss how our two clients are positioned to take part in creative placemaking, and we'll revisit the criteria and

prerequisites for success of these projects. We'll talk about the nuts and bolts of the class's final project and how to use SWOT to analyze creative placemaking potential.

In the second half of class, we'll work together to do a SWOT analysis of the project in a creative placemaking context. What kinds of assets are in place, and what are the neighborhood/organization's weaknesses **in the context of creative placemaking?**

Readings:

- Additional readings TBD about the client/project
- <http://www.artscapediy.org/Creative-Placemaking/Approaches-to-Creative-Placemaking.aspx>

Assignment: Your questions this week will be directed toward our client. We'll be doing site visits next week. For ideas, review placemaking methods as described on the ArtscapeDIY, and think about which methods might be most appropriate for the client project.

WEEK 6, Tuesday, February 10: Site Visit

Visits to sites/meeting with client representative (ideally during class-time, but flexible depending upon student preference/schedules.) On site, we will also be meeting with our client representative. Now is the time to ask any questions you have about the project.

In four weeks, your team will be submitting 20-page report on the creative placemaking potential of your client's project. Use the NEA Our Town "Insights" page, the Arts Place America website, and our readings as guidelines for your report. What have other projects learned, and how have they proceeded?

Over the next two weeks:

- Each individual student will conduct and transcribe one stakeholder interview (10% of your grade).

For next week:

- No questions this week. Instead, work AS A GROUP to submit a 1 to 2 page outline of your client report. This will be the framework for your report and it should address creative placemaking potential and methods. Think about identifying specific creative placemaking opportunities for each client. (10% of your grade)

WEEK 7, Tuesday, February 17: Small Group Meetings

I will meet with groups separately during class time, for one hour each. We'll spend the hour reading and responding to your 1 to 2 page outline.

For next week:

- No questions.
- Submit a first draft of your group's 20-page report. This includes images, maps, and graphics as needed.
- If you haven't done so already, submit a transcript or detailed notes of your individual stakeholder interview (10% of your grade)

WEEK 8, Tuesday, February 24: Discussion of Outline

I will meet with groups separately during class time, for one hour each. We'll review your first draft.

For next week:

- No questions.

- Complete your finished written report, including bibliography and case studies. Create a brief slideshow presentation (10-15 minutes) for the client that outlines your report – make sure to include reference to your process, findings, and resources that the client might use.

WEEK 9, Tuesday, March 3: Dry-run Presentation

We will meet in class to present our final projects to one another. This is your last opportunity to get feedback from me and each other. You'll also submit your 20-page written report this week.

For next week:

- No questions.
- Submit a short statement about your own and your teammates' contribution to the assignment (10% of your grade.)

WEEK 10, Tuesday, March 10: In-Class Presentation to Client