

## Syllabus 456-756 2015

Jan. 7: Introductions, class procedures, requirements, course outline.

Jan. 12: The basics: A2 city government organization, administration, the Mayor and City Council, citizen boards and commissions. Political history. Is the ward system better than "at large"?

Jan. 16: Preview to the budget presentation, 28% and 40%. What's a "core" service? Health, Safety and Welfare? Is that all we need? The constant drive for greater efficiency; how A2 city government survived the great recession without a tax increase.

Jan. 19: No Class, MLK Day

Jan. 21: Tom Crawford, CFO for the City of Ann Arbor. Presentation on the city budget and major factors impacting it including amendments to the state constitution.

Jan. 26: Follow up to CFO's presentation. Safety services; police and fire, crime stats. Legacy costs, labor issues, union contracts and negotiations, State Act 312. Are taxpayers shareholders? Does government have a greater responsibility to workers than private sector companies?

Jan. 28: Setting priorities & conflicting visions on city council. Parks and Human Services VS Safety Services. Options: Expand parks downtown? More police? Pay down retiree health care or pension balance? More affordable and supportive housing? What would you like to do? How?

Feb. 2: Economic Development: The importance of local economic development in Michigan's flawed local government finance system. A2 Spark. Factors that benefit A2 & other knowledge economy cities. Tech growth Downtown, overall effect. Why place matters. Are \$\$ spent on economic development worth it?

Feb. 4: Economic Development. Carsten Hohnke ("Hohnka" ) is Senior Vice President for Strategy & Policy; Michigan Economic Development Council, Former member of the A2 City Council, Former member of the Ex. Board of A2 SPARK.

Feb. 9: The State & Local Government relationship. Serving his second term, State Representative Jeff Irwin is a former member of the Washtenaw County Commission. He will discuss intergovernmental relationships, recent state legislation, the outlook for the state budget, impact on local government and the political climate in Lansing.

Feb. 11: Affordable Housing: Defining the problem. The Continuum of Care, from homelessness to permanent housing. The non-profit safety net; Delonis Center, Alpha House, Safe House, Food Gatherers, Dawn Farms, the network of faith based providers, PORT, etc. Avalon Housing and Supportive Housing.

Feb. 16: Mary Jo Callan, Ex. Director, Dept. of Community Development for the City of Ann Arbor & Washtenaw County reporting on the latest update to the affordable housing needs assessment. She will share the new AF Study.

Feb. 18: Affordable housing; government model: A former student activist, Jennifer Hall is now Ex. Director of the Ann Arbor Housing Commission. Prior to this she was a senior staff member at the Community Development office for the City and County. PowerPoint on A2 Housing Commission, Federal support for affordable housing, local support, etc.

Feb. 23: Affordable Housing: The regional approach. The link between transit and affordable housing. The impact of student off-campus housing. What about "workforce" housing? A voter approved Charter Amendment for rent control? How about a voter approved millage for affordable housing? Would either pass?

Feb. 25: The History of Ann Arbor: The City-University relationship. History of Activism on campus and in A2. First half wrap up. Spring Break, enjoy!

March 9: The Greenbelt -The Greenbelt Campaign, developers VS environmentalists. What the Greenbelt means for Ann Arbor. Does it impact affordable housing? Sprawl VS density. Is density desirable? (You should be reading the Economics of Place.)

March 11: The Model for Mobility. Past, present and future of transportation in A2. Cars, busses, bikes, peds and trains. What's Wally? PowerPoint, maps and storyboards. The AAATA expansion. Road diets, Jackson Rd.

March 16: More transportation. What happened to Michigan's original rail system? Is this the best time for rail in Michigan in 100 years? The Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). How does it benefit A2 and Washtenaw County? East/west rail, buses. Does A2 need a new train station? Is Depot St or Fuller Rd the best location?

March 18: Planning: Land use, zoning, most recent zoning changes (A2D2), development, and controversy over development. Does new development have a downside? The importance of strong neighborhoods. Are historic districts good, bad or both? Do they foster gentrification? Is there a way to stop/slow gentrification? R4C, R1, etc.

March 23: Kirk Westfall - UM Masters of Planning, Former Chair of the City Planning Commission, now serving his first term on City Council. Discussion of planning issues and showing of Kirk's updated, award winning film about Downtowns.

March 25: Downtowns: Why are downtowns important? Are more residents living downtown, good for downtown? Who can afford to live there? What's the relationship with the neighborhoods? Why should the surrounding townships care about Downtown Ann Arbor? The DDA, what does it do? Why is it necessary? What's a TIFF? Does the city need still more parking? \* Finish reading The Economics of Place for next week.

March 30: Why Place Matters: Summer Minnick: Director of Policy Initiatives, Michigan Municipal League. Presentation on the Economics of Place.

April: 1: More Economics of Place. Should cities remake the urban landscape? Is it right for every city? Is there a place for public art? Who pays for it?

April 6: Parks: Who uses them? Does A2 need more parks? Does the city need a big new "central" park? Does it matter who owns and maintains parks? More planning: downtowns, neighborhoods, the importance of physical design, density.

April 8: "The Mayor's Green Energy Challenge." A2's efforts to become more energy efficient and less dependent on fossil fuels. A2 as a leading city in energy conservation. The PACE program. The Sustainability Plan. PowerPoint.

April 13: Local Elections: Who votes? Campaigns in Ann Arbor, tactics, literature, fund raising, etc. The changing role of the press, online news, social media campaigns. (Robo-calls?) The blogosphere: Does it mean anything? Positive VS negative campaigning, wholesale vs retail, fund raising, endorsements, etc. Should local government elections be non-partisan?

April 15: City Council Election Debate. Class members will develop questions, organize and moderate the debate.

April 20: Wrap up. Final goes out after class.

### 456-756 Course Requirements:

Midterm, final and short papers as assigned, attendance and class participation: Class often begins with a discussion of the most recent council actions, city issues. Be prepared to discuss all council meetings on the Wednesday following. Follow news coverage on Tuesday mornings from WEMU 89.5, and everyday online at the Ann Arbor News.

Students are required to attend at least two city meetings during the semester and write two short papers, each at least one page but no more than two describing the meetings. At least one meeting needs to be a City Council voting session unless other factors prevent this. The other meeting could be a community meeting, planning commission, county commission, etc. Three other short papers will be assigned.

Grades: Midterm exam = 30%, final exam = 40%, other assignments and to some extent, class participation = 30%

Required reading:

Ann Arbor News (online. Print edition comes out on Thursdays and Sundays) articles about City Government.

Budget Summaries in the Ann Arbor City Budget. On line, city web site.

A History of Ann Arbor by Jonathan Marwil. University of Michigan Press.

The Economics of Place by Elizabeth Phillips Foley, Colleen Layton, Daniel Gilmartin, 2014 edition. May be available locally also on Amazon, link on Michigan Municipal League web site, [www.mml.org](http://www.mml.org) ISBN 978-1-929923-00-7 Be prepared to discuss in March.

Other print and online articles as assigned.

PowerPoint's will be sent following presentations.

Other readings as assigned.

**Dates to be aware of:** City Council Meetings: Voting sessions: 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday's at 7 PM, (Except for MLK and Presidents Days when Council meets on the following Tuesday.) Council Chambers, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor - City Hall. Live and repeated Coverage on CTN TV. Council working sessions on the second Monday, City Planning Commission meets on Tuesday evenings. Parks Commission meets on third Tuesday. DDA meets on 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday at noon. Check city web site for dates, times and agendas.