

Columbia University GSAPP

Project Management: From Idea to Implementation | PLA4467-1 | R. Karp Group Project Assignments | Overall Guidance

In the field of urban planning and policy, project management manifests in countless ways, and nearly always demands team-based problem solving. Think about almost every urban challenge (and opportunity) facing us today: Homelessness. Constrained transit systems. Climate change and sea level rise. Resource depletion. Drought. Growing inequity and inequality. New technologies. An increasingly interconnected world. The list goes on – and I'm sure many of you have ideas and topics to add to it.

When we move from academia to the workforce, understanding how to work effectively in teams, to manage projects individually as well as within teams, are among the most important skills you will need as a planner. I look forward to hearing from those of you in the class who bring fantastic previous work experience to the cohort; we have lots to learn from each other as we move forward.

Our class is designed nearly entirely around a Team Project, which asks you to work collaboratively in a tight group of five to six for the duration of the class, beginning in Week 1. You will look at a real-life planning project, and each week, be required to submit a different aspect of the project, leading up to a final report and presentation in the final week. Each team will be assigned to one of two projects:

1. *Hunt's Point Strategic Stakeholder Engagement + Facilitation*. This is a real RFP that is currently live with the New York City Economic Development Corporation here in NYC.
2. *Equitable Development Strategic Plan* in Dorchester, MA. This is a real RFP that was put out last year by the Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation, a leading Community Development Corporation and Community Development Financial Institution in Dorchester, Boston.

These are each Request for Proposals (RFPs) that ask a consultant (or consultant team) to respond to a discrete need that the client has for support services. In each case, the client requests many aspects of developing a project plan and other elements that we will be discussing in this class. In instances when aspects are not specifically requested (like a risk management strategy), we will be developing and including them anyway.

The deliverables required for each Team are details in the syllabus, and include:

- *All weekly interim deliverables* as listed in the syllabus, and as described in greater detail on Courseworks in the weekly Group Assignment project descriptions
- *Final Report* – this is the final, complete RFP response that entails the full compilation of all components your team is working on throughout the semester. I expect you will be looking ahead at the syllabus at all interim deliverables, coming to me early with any questions, and working collaboratively to deliver a professional final plan. Since you will be completing sections through the semester, this should not too scary!

- *Final Presentation* – this is a 15-minute presentation delivering your approach to the project, your project management plan, and highlights from your report to me and an panel of project management professionals from the field. You will have **NO MORE THAN 15 MINUTES** for your presentation, plus 15 minutes for Q+A from the panel. You will be graded on clarity, comprehension, and creativity.