Individualized Study Plan

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Community, Environment & Planning ‘17

College of Built Environments

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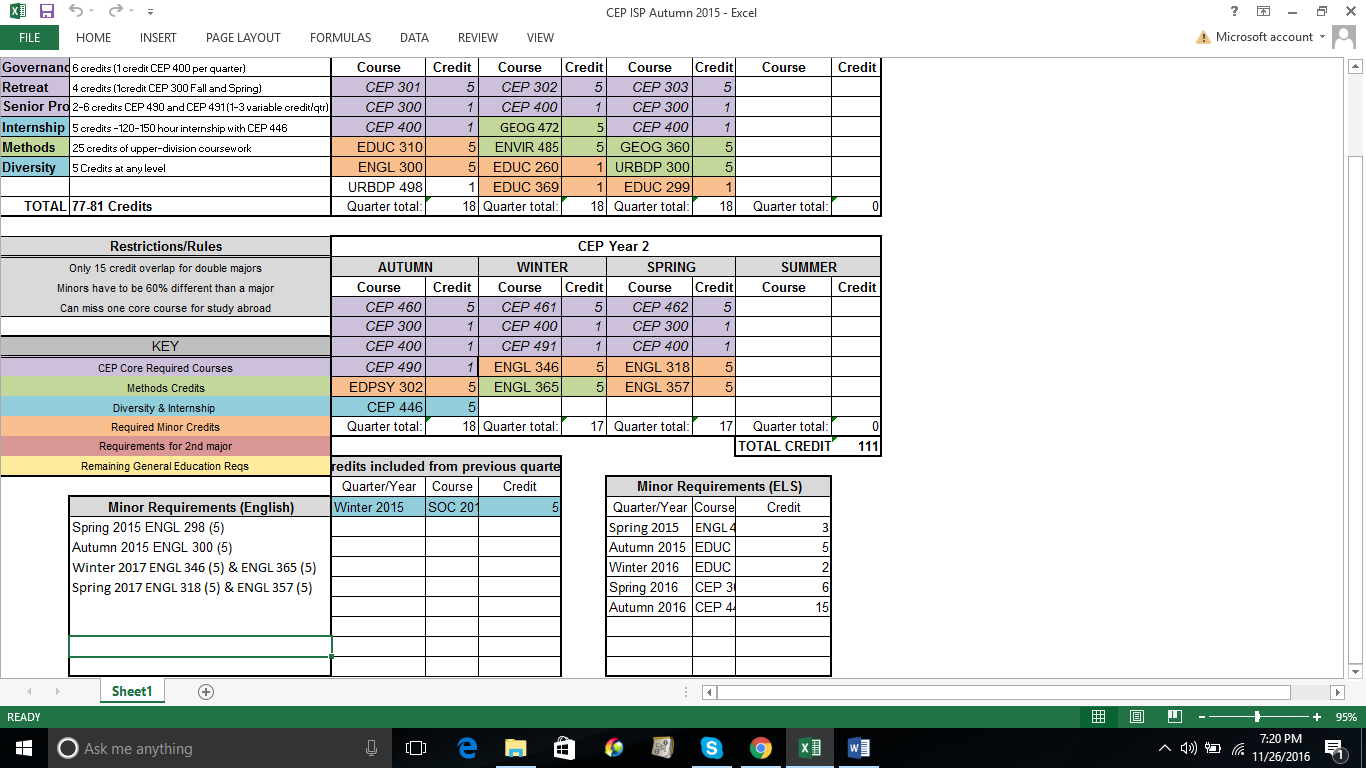
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I spent the first seventeen years of my life almost exclusively in Wichita, Kansas. While growing up in the Midwest shaped me in some positive ways, it also taught me a lot about what I do not want. Wichita charged people to recycle, does not offer a composting program, and has terrible public transportation options. The governor's refusal to fund education properly also frustrates me.

Due in large part to these earlier experiences, my main areas of interest are in the education system and learning about and improving how people communicate with one another, which is why I am pursuing an Education, Learning and Society minor and an English minor. I care a lot about these issues because they have longer-range effects on socioeconomic mobility and can bring people from a wide variety of backgrounds together. Additionally, I care a lot about the environment and want to understand what the environment means to different groups of people and how best to protect it. As a result, I am focusing my Methods credits on learning more about how various people and institutions view the environment.

Since I want to broaden my thinking, I hope to do internships and extracurricular activities that broaden my thinking, too. Interning at companies and organizations with a variety of aims will help me better determine what I want to pursue long-term, as will volunteering and serving in a leadership role with different groups on- and off-campus.

Ultimately, I hope to work on policies in some capacity, either as a government employee or at a nonprofit. This will likely entail graduate school, which I plan to do after spending some time in the workforce. Working full-time and additional volunteer work will hopefully allow me to return to graduate school with a new appreciation for the different communities here and a determination to take all of their needs into consideration when designing and executing policy. 



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Autumn 2015   
CEP 301 (5): The Idea of Community  
"Theories of community and communal rights and responsibilities. Experience building a learning community within major. Explores struggles for community in every sector of life."  
  
This was my first time taking a philosophy class, and I really enjoyed doing so. Comparing and contrasting different philosophers' opinions with my own and those of my classmates caused me to re-evaluate how I came to see the world the way I do. It also provides a helpful context when thinking about how other countries' governments operate, as not all of them were influenced by Locke to the degree the United States was.   
  
ENGL 300 B (5): Reading Major Texts – War and Peace (M)  
"Intensive examination of one or a few major works of literature. Classroom work to develop skills of careful and critical reading. Book selection varies, but reading consists of major works by important authors and of selected supplementary materials."  
  
I originally took this because I want to minor in English and be able to say I read *War and Peace*. I now realize the most valuable aspect of this course was that it taught me about Russian culture and values in 1812 as well as today. I didn't even realize my knowledge of Russia was limited to Ukraine and Putin until I took this course. My professor grew up in Russia, so her insight into Tolstoy's epic and Russian culture was really valuable and helped me better understand what influenced and continues to influence Russian people and culture.  
  
EDUC 310 (5): Current Issues in Education: Comparative Education Exploring Issues Internationally  
"Covers a current issue and provides the opportunity to read and discuss educational issues with other students and faculty and to learn of opportunities in the College of Education programs."  
  
This class fulfilled one of my ELS minor requirements and taught me a lot about the education systems of Germany, Norway, Kuwait and South Korea. I had some knowledge of Germany and Norway prior to this class, but EDUC 310 taught me a lot about how the culture of a nation influences its education system. It's an obvious idea now that I know it, but previously I had never really connected that a nation's culture can cause its education system to work really well there, but those same practices could be ineffective or detrimental elsewhere.   
  
URBDP 498 A (1): Planning as a Profession (M)  
"This course gives students interested in the planning profession an opportunity to understand the different pathways and career choices within the profession. This course will introduce students to guest professionals in various planning careers and highlight key issues, skills used, and tips to entering the field."  
  
This class gave me a better idea of what areas of planning I might want to consider after college. Working for a business interests me less than government or nonprofit work. It was also a good way for me to begin networking with Seattle-area planning professionals who I will likely interact with in my career post-graduation.   
  
CEP 300 (1): Retreat   
"Focuses on planning analysis assessment and development of the major. Opportunities for community building and all-major policy deliberation and decisions. Workshops for skill building in consensus, facilitation, and for major-specific activities such as developing individual study plans and study abroad experiences."  
  
The CEP Retreat allows me to bond with other people in my major so we are better able to work together the rest of the year. My committee also has the opportunity to accomplish a lot of long-term planning and policy at the retreat, too. CEP Retreats also include workshops to teach us about skills that will aid in working with others in-major and post-graduation.  
  
CEP 400 (1): Governance Practicum   
"Emphasizes personal and collective leadership, democratic decision making, and learning through direct action and reflection. Explores and develops students' personal skills as doers and leaders, while also learning how to form and function as effective groups."  
  
My work on the policy committee of CEP gives me experience in how a group of people goes about drafting and revising policies based on the needs of everyone in the major. Since CEP requires consensus to pass anything, I learn how to work and negotiate with other people to pass new policies. Pointing at governance also allows me to learn how to lead both smaller committee meetings and major-wide meetings. 

Winter 2016   
CEP 302 (5): Environmental Response  
"Explores issues of environmental crisis and societal responses. Readings and reflective analysis from broad selection of authoritative sources to develop grounded perspective in ecological literacy and consciousness. Concurrently, experiential education in challenges and practical responses to building sustainable society through participation in community-based environmental effort."  
  
This course will give me a better understanding of the environmental issues that are most pressing at present and what is being done to improve those situations. Hopefully, this course will also provide me with a better idea of what environmental problems matter most to me. Learning more about how and what different communities are affected will also better prepare me to work toward solutions to those environmental problems.   
  
GEOG 472 (5): Race, Nature, and Power (M)  
"Explores the role that racial formation and power relations play in the cultural, political and spatial production of nature. Draws on geographies of nature-society relations, political ecology and environmental justice literatures to interrogate the link between nature imaginaries and conservation practices."  
  
I really like the connection between the environment, race relations, and government policy in this class. The work the course professor seems to focus on is in Latin and South America, which are areas of which I have very limited knowledge. While it is unreasonable to expect one course to teach me all I should know about so many different cultures, I do hope it at least provides me with a basic understanding of some of the problems affecting those communities.   
  
ENVIR 485 (5): Environmental Planning and Permitting in Practice  
"Advanced survey of environmental planning and permitting as encountered by environmental and natural resource professionals in Washington State and beyond. Focuses on Washington State acts (SEPA, SMA, GMA) and Federal systems (NEPA, CWA ESA) that shape environmental land use planning and federal planning and permitting systems."  
  
This class taught me about some of the more technical aspects of environmental planning, about which I knew very little. A lot of internships and entry-level jobs in planning seem to focus largely on permitting, so this class seemed like a good way for me to understand how and why we permit the way we do.   
  
EDUC 260 (1): The Dream Project: Introduction to Mentoring Strategies  
"Introduces mentoring strategies and topics related to social mobility and educational access. Supports students' mentorship of high school students on college readiness and access to higher education."   
  
I wanted to volunteer with the Dream Project because I want to learn more about the education system. I was particularly interested in the Dream Project because my knowledge of Seattle area high schools is very limited. The idea of working on policy for Seattle Public Schools appeals to me a lot, and this helped me learn more about the problems this particular school system faces.  
  
EDUC 369 (1): The Dream Project: High School Visits - Field Experience (M)  
"Involves weekly travel to local high schools, mentoring low-income or first-generation juniors and seniors through the college readiness and admissions process.”  
  
Working at Tec High School helped me learn about several presently unfamiliar facets of Seattle's schools. It is in South Seattle, which has many cultures of which I have only limited knowledge. The school's technology and engineering foci will also provide me with new learning opportunities about what magnet schools are like and how effective students find them.  
  
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Spring 2016   
CEP 303 (5): Social Structures and Processes  
"Investigates use of formal and informal social structures and processes within context of community and environment. Looks at patterns and institutions of social organization and relationships among different sectors. Issues of interrelatedness, citizenship, knowledge, and communication.”  
  
CEP 303 will allow me to explore how planning can positively affect the world. Learning about the interrelatedness of different cultures and ideas could also help me assist more communities at the same time and take more people's needs into account when considering different ideas. It also counts toward my ELS minor.  
  
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URBDP 300 (5): Introduction to Urban Design and Planning  
"Principles and theories of urban structure and institutions. Concepts and logic of planning as a community process and a professional activity. Evolution of planning ideas in response to changing social, economic, and environmental conditions within the American political framework. Complementary nature of public and private responsibilities. Major procedures used by planners."

Originally, I took this course because I planned to minor in Urban Design and Planning. Upon realizing I was more passionate about English than urban design, I decided to change minors. Nonetheless, it was really helpful to take this course and learn about a lot of different viewpoints planners can have and how sometimes the most environmentally-friendly option in theory is not actually the best in practice due to the public’s reaction and response to it.  
  
EDUC 299 (1): Education, Learning, and Society Colloquium  
"Provides a common learning experience where students learn from researchers and practicing educators about current pedagogical projects and theories. Fosters self-reflexive projects to build understanding of learning pathways."   
  
This is an ELS minor requirement, but I think it is useful in other ways, too. I have very little experience with university-level research, and this course would give me a better understanding of what that looks like in the educational field. It would also give me the opportunity to learn more about the education research currently going on and that people consider most pressing. My interest in educational policy work makes that research particularly helpful to know about.  
  
GEOG 360 (5): Principles of GIS Mapping  
"Origins, development, and methods of cartographic mapping. Principles of data representation and map design for thematic mapping and spatial analysis. Introduction to principles of geographic information systems."  
  
Prior to CEP, I didn't know what GIS was. My Planning as a Profession course taught me it is practically essential to know to work in planning. This class served as a good introduction for me and helped me determine jobs involving a lot of GIS are not the best fit for me. That said, GIS is really helpful to know if I work with people who use GIS a lot or just want to understand maps and the decisions behind them better, so I still think this was a useful course.

Autumn 2016   
CEP 460 (5): Planning in Context  
"Examines theory against backdrop of practice for broad historical understanding of social, political, environmental planning. Critique from viewpoints, e.g., planning history, ethics, ecofeminism, environmental justice, class and capitalism, planning and global economy. Develop personalized history reflecting individual experience, professional experience, and philosophical heritage of planning profession."   
  
CEP 460 gives me valuable experiences with working with a team of fellow students on a project. This will allow me to improve how I interact with team members who have different backgrounds and opinions than I do. Additionally, by doing planning projects with organizations in the surrounding area, I can expand my network of professionals I know so as to be more aware of new opportunities as I progress in my career. This also counts toward my ELS minor.   
  
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CEP 490 (1): Senior Project Prep Seminar I: Research and Project Scoping  
"Supports the conceptualization and planning of senior project/capstone work. Focuses on selecting a project, beginning a literature review, finding a mentor, and developing a plan."

I will use this course to explore different areas in which I am interested and preparing an in-depth study of that issue. Learning how to find a mentor will also have positive ramifications for me beyond this project, as I do not presently know how to go about finding and consulting with a mentor. This class also counts toward my needed Additional Writing credits.  
  
EDPSY 302 (5): Child Development and Learning  
“Uses readings, discussions, naturalistic observations, and "virtual" children to understand the different ways children develop - physically, cognitively, social-emotionally, in language and literacy, and in approaches to learning - during early childhood, the interplay between each of these domains and the environmental context, and the theories about the developmental mechanisms underlying these changes.”

While my main reason for taking Child Development and Learning is because it fulfills an ELS minor requirement, I also think it will prove valuable in other ways. Knowing more about how people develop can make me more aware of environmental issues that could affect human development. This class can also teach me more about the different ways people develop, which will most likely help me communicate better with people who had different experiences than me.  
  
CEP 446 (5): Internship  
"Connects core and individual courses with field work. Group and individual readings develop understanding of how students' internships and field placements constitute particular element of community and environmental planning. Explores how what we do for a living is part of our lives as citizens and public service."   
  
Through focusing on what I am gaining through my internship and how classmates feel about theirs, I hope to learn more about what kind of work I would like to do after graduation. I want to live a purposeful life, and doing rewarding work that I think benefits others is, to me, a big part of a purposeful life. Learning more about networking will also be helpful, especially because I am an introvert.  
  
Winter 2017   
CEP 461 (5): Ethics and Identity  
"Examination of personal, societal, vocational, environmental, planning ethics. Readings and discourse on ethical foundations for public life. Individual and group readings on values, human potential. Develops understanding of ecological context, moral responsibility, self-awareness. Constructs positive, diverse view of humanity, environment regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, beliefs."

This course will challenge a lot of my beliefs and why I have them. Comparing my experiences and values to those of my classmates will force me to consider or reconsider my ideas. Regardless of how I personally think after the course, it ought to improve my understanding of and respect for different ideas than my own.  
  
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CEP 491 (1): Senior Project Prep Seminar II: Methods and Actualization  
"Focuses on implementing the senior project/capstone, including revisions and updates as seen fit."

My senior project will give me a good chance to conduct research, something I have always wanted to do but never prioritized enough to make happen. Investigating deeply into a topic of my own interest will be good preparation for graduate-level study, should I ultimately choose to pursue it. This also counts as an Additional Writing credit, which I need to graduate.

ENGL 346 (5): Studies in Short Fiction  
"The American and English short story, with attention to the influence of writers of other cultures. Aspects of the short story that distinguish it, in style and purpose, from longer fiction.”  
  
This will be a class for my English minor. By learning more about how to communicate an entire story in only a few pages, I hope to become better at learning how to write concisely in other forms of communication, also.  
  
ENGL 365 (5): Literature and Discourse on the Environment (M)  
“Pays attention to verbal expression; forms and genres; and historical, cultural, and conceptual contexts of the natural environment. Focuses on sites, nations, and historical periods. Forms and genres include: nature writing, environmentalist discourses, the pastoral, the sublime, discourses of the city, fiction, poetry, nonfiction prose, dramatic forms, and religious texts.”

This course counts toward my English minor. I think I’ll enjoy it a lot because it ties my love of English and writing with my interest in the environment. CEP 302 was my first experience with reading a lot of literature on the environment, and I really liked reading more environmentally-focused books, so I hope to learn about more authors and topics in this class.  
  
  
Spring 2017   
CEP 462 (5): Community and Environment  
"Capstone quarter merges core seminars, disciplinary courses in major, community field experiences for mastery of personal knowledge and skills. Reflection and synthesis of themes in major; engagement with contemporary issues. Compares theoretical definitions of community and environment with individual philosophies and knowledge within thoughtful, applied context."

CEP 462 will be much-needed before graduating and facing the reality check that is the workforce. Reflection is very beneficial when evaluating how and why a person has changed and how that will or ought to affect his or her future decisions. Being more thoughtful about my own experiences and those of my classmates will allow me to imagine all of us more complexly and develop empathy.  
  
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ENGL 318 (5): Black Literary Genres  
"Considers how generic forms and conventions have been discussed and distributed in the larger context of African American, or other African diasporic literary studies. Links the relationship between generic forms to questions of power within social, cultural, and historical contexts."   
  
This class counts toward my English minor, so I’m taking it in part for that reason. I chose this specific course because I want to learn more about the experiences of people who interact with the world differently than I do. Reading and discussing works in the black literary genre will make me more aware of what black people have dealt with in the past and continue to deal with, which will make me better equipped to act as an ally.  
  
ENGL 478 (5): Jewish American Literature and Culture  
“Examines the relationship between language policy and social organization; the impact of language policy on immigration, education, and access to resources and political institutions; language policy and revolutionary change; language rights.”

This will be the final class I need for my English minor. Policy in all its forms is very interesting to me, so I’m excited to learn more about a different kind of policy through this class, especially because it focuses on Serbo-Croatian, a language with which I am largely unfamiliar.  
  
Diversity Credit: SOC 201: Introductory Topics in Sociology: Contemporary Chinese Communities   
  
"Selected introductory topics of contemporary interest."  
  
I have always felt like my knowledge of non-Western societies was very limited, and decided to take this class last winter to begin to rectify that problem. Through this course, I learned about many of the issues and events that shape China as it currently exists. While I do not pretend to be an expert on Chinese culture or history, I do at least have a basic understanding of China's urban-rural divide, one-child policy, and how it came to house so many factories. Learning about the world's largest country was very interesting and made me even more aware of the problems that arise when society only discusses Western nations.

Internships

* Writing Intern at WordRake, a writing software company that makes writing more concise
* Editorial Intern at eNotes, an education website that helps students better understand coursework
* Outreach and Intake Intern at Treehouse, a nonprofit that aims to match Washington state foster children’s educational outcomes match the educational outcomes of children not in foster care

Extracurricular Activities

* MUP Mentorship Program
* Evening Volunteer at ROOTS Young Adult Shelter
* Director of Internal Relations for UWs Supplier Diversity Program
* Dream Project Volunteer at Tec High School
* Tutor at Eckstein Middle School
* Member and Fellow of Learning Council for C21 (Center for 21st Century Liberal Learning)
* UW Catholic Newman Center
  + Freshman Group Leader
  + Member of Women's Ministry Team
  + Member of Veritas Undergrad Night Team

Senior Project Ideas

* Improving the transparency of the UW Alert system