

187 Assignments 2 & 3 : Senior Research Project—First Draft

Senior Sequence Urban Studies & Planning

A2 Due 01/31/12	Turn complete draft of your SRP -- a printed copy and upload the same file to your portfolio (30%)
A3 Due 2/2/12	Evaluate the draft SRP of one fellow student (using the web site)

For this assignment we want a complete first draft of your SRP (plus one evaluation, by you, of a fellow student's SRP). The components of an SRP are spelled out below. Limit your thesis to a maximum of 25 pages (including the first page with the title, abstract and start of the introduction). Examples of completed SRPs are on our class web site at: <http://www.seniorsequence.net/index.php/guide/writing/exemplary/>

MAKE SURE YOU SHIFT YOUR STYLE FROM PROPOSAL MODE TO COMPLETED THESIS MODE. That is, give us a draft of a completed thesis (not a statement of what you plan to do). Do not give any sidebar comments in the body of your paper itself. In other words, don't make parenthetical comments in the body like: if only I had more time I would have included xxx and xyy; I didn't get a chance to interview so and so yet –but I will do so in January; I thought this info would be helpful but now I see I was going down the wrong road; etc. Comments of this sort are a distraction. We want your draft to approximate a finished product as closely as you can. Then, if you like, you can include an addendum at the end that spells out your frustrations, data gaps, wishful thinking gone wrong, whatever else you want to share.

Components of the SRP

- Cover Page (1 page)
- Introduction (2-3 pages)
- Literature Review (4-5 pages)
- Research Strategy (2-4 pages)
- Findings and Analysis (8-10 pages)
- Conclusion (2-4 pages)
- Appendices (Optional, 1-3 pages)
- Bibliography (include at least ten peer reviewed sources in addition to your other non-academic and primary sources)

**The page ranges listed above are approximate. If you did a quantitative study, you may need to allocate more space to explaining your research design. The main thing is to get your key points across without fluff or too many details.*

Cover Page (1 page)

The first page should include your SRP title, your name, university affiliation, abstract, four or five keywords, and the start of your introduction. See *Illustration 1* at the end of this set of instructions. Please follow the formatting shown in *Illustration 1*. Be sure to include four of five keywords at the base of your abstract.

The abstract should succinctly state in approximately 150 words the issue addressed by your thesis and summarize its key findings. In contrast to the introduction, the abstract is a self-contained summary of the key highlights. An abstract should tell us what are we going to learn from your SRP that we do not know now and why is it worth knowing.

The abstract should be written in clear, non-technical language so that the following questions could be answered by a member of the general public who reads it:

- (1) What was the specific purpose of the study?
- (2) What information/research strategy did you use to arrive at these findings (i.e., what conceptual and methodological approach did you use)?
- (3) What are the main findings?

Introduction (2-3 pages)

Introduce the SRP topic and your question. Why is this important or interesting? While the original research component of the paper may be quite narrow in scope (e.g., a case study of a particular program), the introduction should frame the case in a broader context. The introduction also should give the reader an overview of the organization of the paper. Many briefly mention their research strategy in the introduction, but this is not necessary. Subdivide your intro (and your whole thesis) into sections with meaning full subtitles (i.e., headers that serve as clear signposts telling the reader what to expect).

Use the introduction to explain to the reader what is it about poverty, community economic development, inequality, industrial ecology, regional planning, class conflict, racism, social movements, NGO networking, or whatever, that your SRP tries to understand or prove. What are we going to learn from you study? What kind of questions do you raise about your object of study (i.e., what really happened? how can we change this? why did it happen? what's going to happen next? how can we make people understand?). There is a balance to be struck between what you include in the intro and the lit review. These sections should be mutually reinforcing without being redundant.

Make sure your introduction is an introduction to the SRP, not to the topic in general. Make sure you don't provide such a broad background to the topic that it takes pages to get to your argument (this explains our limit of 2-3 pages). You should give a thumbnail sketch of where you're going to go before you delve too deeply into background. Sometimes students do not give this thumbnail sketch because they expect the abstract to be doing that. Don't consider the abstract as part of the paper, but rather a separate summary. (This can create a sense of deja vu when you read an abstract and then read the opening paragraphs of an article, but that's ok.)

Literature Review (4-5 pages)

The Literature Review synthesizes existing answers to the same or similar questions. The literature review should not include every work under the sun that is related to your topic. The literature review is not the same as an annotated bibliography (an annotated bibliography simply lists a series of summaries of relevant books and articles). Your literature review should be integrated. It should be organized around some theme or argument. Think of the literature review as the place to orient your reader to the intellectual terrain of your topic (i.e., the fields of pertinent scholarly discourse on your subject matter). Drawing on the work of others, your literature review should make clear the assumptions, reasoning, and arguments that inform your study. In examining a specific setting or set of individuals, the writer should show how she is studying a case of a larger phenomenon. By linking the specific research questions to larger theoretical constructs or to national policy issues, the writer shows that the particulars of the study serve to illuminate larger issues and, therefore, are of significance. Here you show that you know the important work that has been done in the field and what is currently being undertaken. If you know of other people doing research which sounds very similar to your own, explain the

crucial differences, and the additional advantages of being able to compare the findings of the studies. When making reference to literature, use Chicago Style parenthetical citations--for example: (Smith, 1985: 24), or "Smith (1985: 24) found that..." All referenced items must have a complete citation in the bibliography. **I highly recommend using Endnote or some other bibliographic software to manage your citations and associated files and notes.*

Research Strategy (2-4 pages)

Here you explain your research design and your logic for choosing particular methods (why, for instance, did you choose to do interviews, content analysis, and/or archival research). Your research design is your "action plan for getting from here to there, where here may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and there is some set of conclusions (answers) about these questions" (Yin 1994: 19). Describe your research strategy (methodology) so the reader understands what you did. Identify any shortcomings of your strategy. Define necessary terms. This is not the place to go on and on about the ordinary trials and tribulations of doing the research (i.e., how difficult it was getting a hold of a key informant, the fact that your topic was a moving target and changed over time). Here you have to convince the reader that your approach was rigorous and based in social science methods-be they qualitative or quantitative. The length of this section can vary depending on the kind of research you conducted. Someone doing an inductive qualitative research project will have less to say about research design than someone doing quantitative hypothesis testing (the former will need more room to discuss their findings while the latter needs less).

Findings and Analysis (8-10 pages)

Describe your research findings. The descriptive component should report what you found. Use diagrams, maps, graphs, tables, charts or other illustrations where appropriate. Depending on the size of your maps, tables, and/or illustrations you may want to include them in an appendix. Anything that takes up more than one-half a page should probably go in an appendix. Don't go overboard. If you do decide to include attachments, limit yourself to one or two pages. All small diagrams or tables should be folded into the text. The analysis component should interpret your findings and consider the implications for the research question you addressed.

Conclusion (2-4 pages)

The main task here is to reiterate the main points of your study, and to suggest why you think it matters. What are the implications of your research? What questions remain unanswered? Based on your findings, you may want to suggest an agenda for further study, or point to gaps in policy that need to be addressed.

Appendices (Optional, 1-3 pages)

Appendices can include supporting documentation such as charts, diagrams, maps, etc., that don't easily fit into the body of the text. Tables and charts presenting the research findings should be placed in the text, not in an appendix.

Bibliography (include at least ten peer reviewed sources in addition to your other non-academic and primary sources)

Illustration 1. Model (template) of how we want you to format the first page of your SRP.

**Watershed Restoration Plans:
A Case Study of the Chollas Creek Enhancement Program**

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March 13, 2008

Senior Research Project
Submitted in partial satisfaction of a BA in
Urban Studies and Planning,
University of California, San Diego

Abstract:

The Chollas Creek Enhancement Program was adopted in 2002 by the City of San Diego as a plan to guide the restoration of the highly urbanized Pueblo watershed. As of 2007 the first two phases of the restoration plan were implemented. This paper identifies the social and political processes that enabled the Pueblo watershed restoration plan to be adopted and implemented. It is believed that a ground swell of environmental advocacy groups was a significant factor in the adoption of this plan. However, through interviews with key actors and through the comparison of past restoration plans, this study shows that the successes of the Chollas Creek Enhancement Program are rooted in two major factors. One factor was the use of regulatory sciences through the methodical monitoring programs that were implemented by the federal government through the Clean Water Act. The second factor was the continual education of local political decision-making officials on environmental issues; thus effectively closing the disconnect between political officials and environmental scientists. The paper argues that these processes and the structures involved constitute an ideal model for future efforts in adopting restoration plans for highly urbanized watersheds.

Keywords: urbanization, watershed restoration, regulatory sciences, Chollas Creek

Introduction:

In 1972 the federal government passed the Clean Water Act (CWA) in response to increasing levels of pollution appearing in our nation's water bodies. One of the first mandates of the CWA was the elimination of all forms of direct dumping of untreated water into our nation's water bodies; however, more than thirty years have passed and the pollution levels in the nation's water bodies continue to rival those of the past. Due to a rapid rate of urbanization throughout our nation's watersheds, large amounts of non-point pollutants from car oils, lawn

Illustration 2. Model (template) of how we want you to format pages in the body of your SRP.

A Shift in Watershed Management

The City of San Diego's successful adoption of the Chollas Creek Enhancement Program is not an isolated incident of watershed restoration efforts. The local efforts to restore the Chollas Creek are part of a shift in environmental consciousness. This shift is part of a significantly larger movement taking place across the nation in areas such as Chesapeake Bay, Maryland and throughout Oregon. A growing number of watershed restoration efforts points to an acceptance of the negative impacts which human actions have had on the nation's watersheds. Rapid urbanization and the channeling of creeks beds have had significant impacts in the degradation of biodiversity and the health of all plant and animal life.

The unintended effects of urbanization have come to be recognized as the water bodies have become increasingly polluted in urbanized areas. For example, in the past, to control cyclical incidences of flooding, the Army Core of Engineers took on major projects to straighten rivers and line creek beds with concrete. These efforts accomplished their goal by quickly removing the undesired water; however, it also prevented the native species of plants, fish, terrestrial animals, and insects from being able to survive in this new concrete environment. The removal of native plants and the addition of impermeable concrete beds prevented pollution in storm runoff from seeping into the ground and being filtered out of the water supply (Goin 1997, 49). Levels of water pollution were further increased by growing levels of non-point pollution stemming from additional impermeable surfaces such as parking lots, roadways, houses, and commercial buildings (Pezzoli 2000, 344).

In 1972 the Clean Water Act (CWA) was passed making it illegal for all untreated waste water to be directly dumped into any water bodies. The CWA was enforced by federal agencies through a command and control system of ecological monitoring. This meaning that the EPA