

187 Assignment #2 : SRP—Draft Research Design (plus discussion of evidence and preliminary findings)

Senior Sequence Urban Studies & Planning

Grade Value	10%
Due Date	Tues. Jan. 12, 2010 (turn in printed copy at the beginning of class)

This assignment has three parts: **(1)** a cover page including your SRP title, your name, university affiliation, abstract, four or five keywords, and the start of your introduction; **(2)** a two to four page draft of your SRP's research design section, and **(3)** a two or three page text that elaborates on your research design by critically discussing the strengths and weaknesses of your evidence in relationship to your preliminary findings. In this third/last part of the assignment you can share your frustrations, data gaps, wishful thinking gone wrong, whatever else you want to share (as long as it ties in with your research design, evidence and struggle to begin formulating findings).

To see where this assignment fits into the larger SRP framework, check out the instructions for A#4 (a guide to completing all sections of the SRP). Examples of completed SRPs are 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 research design section (not a statement of what you plan to do; but rather what you did!). We realize that you may still be refining your research strategy, but for this exercise you need to be clear and affirmative. In other words, do not give any sidebar comments in the research design section itself. Don't make parenthetical comments in the body like: if only I had more time I would have included xxx and yyy; 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 should go into the second part of the assignment. We want the draft of your research design section to approximate a finished product as closely as you can.

(1). 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.

Abstract

The abstract should succinctly state in 150-200 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 (first paragraph only)

The emphasis of this assignment is on the research design. But for the purposes of the cover page, do include the first few opening lines of an intro (again, see the illustration below).

(2). Research Strategy (2-4 pages)

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.

(3) Discussion (2-3 pages)

Outline the strengths and weaknesses of your research design and evidence in relationship to your preliminary findings. For this part of the assignment you can refer back to the Transition Plan assignment you did at the end of last quarter. For the 186 Transition assignment you described and critically discussed your sources of data (i.e., the evidence you are mobilizing in support of your argument or position). For this current 187 assignment you can rework and update that material. See Part III of Robson (2002) for types of data. You can even include a table again (like the one shown below); but including a table is optional. The main thing is to reflect critically on your research design and evidence in light of your preliminary findings

Source of Evidence	Strength/Weakness	How does this evidence fit into your project (what light does this evidence shed on your SRP's main argument/position; how does the evidence tie in with your preliminary findings)?
1. Archival Records (be specific)		
2.		
3.		

Illustration 1: A properly formatted cover page for a Senior Research Project

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

Adam Krohn
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