Short Courses Offered in 2009 by the Urban Research Centre

Effective Community Consultation (2 days)
26 - 27 February

Despite widespread acceptance of the need for community consultation and high levels of expenditure on it, the phenomena of superficial hype, political hi-jack, consultation fatigue, stakeholder cynicism and unpleasant public meetings have emerged as significant challenges for the consultation practitioner. This two day practical workshop deals with the theory and principles on which community consultation practice is based, the many barriers to good practice, practical solutions and opportunities to practice these.

Developer Contributions (2 Days)
5 - 6 March

There has been a number of substantial changes to the developer contributions mechanisms in the EPA Act as a result of the planning reforms by the NSW Government. In addition, the NSW Government is currently reviewing all aspects of the developer contribution system. This course will provide detailed information on the impact of all these changes on the actual operation of the developer contributions system. The course is an ideal opportunity for the development contribution practitioner to keep up to date.

Planning for Non-Planners (1 Day)
20 March, 26 June, 25 September

This one day course will provide non-planners with a robust introduction to the NSW Planning System. The morning will examine the planning process in NSW, who does what and what all the terms and jargon means. It will provide a framework for participants. The afternoon session will examine planning case studies in detail, from lodgement of the application for development through to the final planning approval. In addition, there will be a question and answer session where participants will have the opportunity once and for all to demystify the planning system.
Community land trusts: best-practice permanently affordable home ownership and community governance (2 days) 23-24 March

Community land trusts are a proven model of permanently affordable homeownership for low-median income households in the United States, balancing the dual aims of householder equity gain and affordability protection over time through a model of land stewardship. This short course is for people who want to learn about CLTs in the USA and their potential in Australia. It deals with the basic structure and function of community land trusts in the USA, addresses the transferability of CLTs to an Australian context and the integration of housing affordability and community resilience to challenges such as climate change and food insecurity.

Introduction to Climate Change (1 day) 27 March, 20 November

Climate change will have an impact on everything we do. This short course aims to provide an overview of the basic science of climate change, sources of greenhouse gases and the possible impacts of climate change on their work. It will provide a guide about useful information sources and it will examine the implications of climate change for policy at all levels of Government. It will also examine the implications of climate change for the planning system.

Making Sustainable Places (4 days) 14 -15, 21 - 22 May

Sustainability is part of many conversations about urban areas and issues but what does it really mean and how can/should/will sustainability issues affect cities, neighbourhoods, organisations and households. Participating in this four day short course will help you find out.

The teaching methods in the course will be a variety of lectures about the current state of knowledge and key concepts in sustainability, presentations from key practitioners about Australian and international case studies, and instruction in the use of a variety of important tools that can assist professional staff in dealing with sustainability issues. Participants will work through a number of exercises including a major exercise on the last day of the course.
Social Impact Assessment: The Essentials (2 days)
28-29 May, 29 - 30 October

This short course is for people who want to prepare social impact assessments (SIAs) and for people who need to review SIAs submitted to them. It deals with the role of SIA in land use planning as well as other public policy contexts. It addresses common misconceptions, sources of poor practice, ways to deal with short timeframes and small budgets, ethical issues and standards of good professional practice. The course is a mix of presentation and group learning experiences. A helpful set of course materials and reference list is provided. Participants can also add their names to an Alert list for post-course updates of relevant research material.

Affordable Housing (2 days)
11-12 June

Increasing the supply of affordable housing is becoming a policy objective of all layers of Government. The aim of this course is to explain affordable housing concepts and issues, including the drivers and characteristics of innovative affordable housing models. It will also present the latest affordable housing policies and strategies.

Writing Policy Documents (1 day)
19 June

With so much policy making on the run, is writing policy a dying art? This one day workshop outlines the golden rules for good policy writing, provides examples and provides an intensive practice opportunity.

Introduction to Urban Design for Planners (4 days)
25 - 26 June and 9 -10 July

As planners and others in Local Government have been increasingly drawn into discussions concerning Urban Design they are sometimes hampered by a lack of understanding about some key Urban Design concepts. The objective of this short course is to provide an intensive introduction to the discipline of urban design (its key concepts and elements) and a solid, practical, grounding in local area analysis and quality design outcomes, predominantly at the plan making stage, but also at the development assessment stage.
Social Issues for (Town) Planners (1 day)

Traditional perspectives, new research, implications for good practice. July 30, October 15th

This short course examines traditional approaches to social issues in town planning practice and provides a new perspective. Participants at the course will learn how the new evidence from social research can help them in their jobs as town planners.

Urban Governance: Cities, Communities and Workplaces (4 days) 6 - 7 and 13 - 14 August

Governance is a central but often overlooked issue in Urban Management. What is governance? What are the principles of good governance? How can they be extended to all parts of your organisation? How can you audit your own practices? This short course answers these questions, reviews governance practice in urban organisations across the world and provides participants with knowledge about some key governance tools. Participants also get an opportunity as part of the course to prepare a governance audit for an organisation they are familiar with and provide recommendations about how governance in that organization could be improved.

Planning Law Update (2 days) 27 - 28 August

The Planning system, in both legal and administrative terms, is constantly under review. For instance, at present (November 2008), major changes to the EP&A Act have been assented to, and are being commenced in stages. Amendments to delegated legislation and Environmental Planning Instruments occur regularly and good administrative practices emerge. The Urban Research Centre (UWS) believes that there is a need for an annual, intensive two-day Short Course for practising Planners on Planning Law and Practice.
Financing Cities (4 days)  
10 - 11 and 17 - 18 September

Financing the large amounts of physical infrastructure required to keep cities running and growing at a time when many governments, who have been the traditional providers of this infrastructure, face financial constraints is a key challenge for urban managers. In order to be able to enter into the debate about financing cities it is important to develop a basic financial literacy and to understand the framework of public finance in Australia and elsewhere. This course undertakes both these tasks as well as providing a rigorous introduction to public private partnerships (PPPs) – seen by many as a key source of infrastructure financing. Lastly, the course undertakes a detailed case study in the economics of development which enables participants to practice their financial skills in a familiar urban context.

Introduction to Property Development for Planners (2 days)  
17 - 18 September

Planners are key stakeholders in the development process but how much do they really understand about the property development process and the economics of property feasibility. This hands on-course uses a Parramatta case study to develop a detailed feasibility study for a development site. It gives planners an opportunity to look at all aspects of feasibility analysis. The course will involve practitioners involved in the property development process.