

## Virginia Tech Honors-Urban Affairs & Planning SuperStudio

Concurrent, collaborative, co-taught, co-requisite

5 transdisciplinary 3 credit topics courses, 15-week semester

(1) environmental policy and social change, (2) data analysis for health reform, (3) innovation for the public good, (4) the future of higher education, and (5) the future of employment



Additional 1 credit co-requisite team-taught policy context lab

Meet 3 times per week total, ~3-hours of in-class time per week

Shared theme: Green New Deal

Provides common context in which to interrogate overarching concepts like equity, representation, ethics, etc.

Framing for invited experts as discussion facilitators



Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
1	Logistical topics	Universal concepts	Threshold concepts
2	Threshold concepts	Universal concepts	Threshold concepts
3	Threshold concepts	Universal concepts	Threshold concepts
4	Logistical topics	Universal concepts	Logistical topics
5	Logistical topics	Universal concepts	Logistical topics
6	Logistical topics	Universal concepts	Shared concepts
7	Shared concepts	Universal concepts	Shared concepts
8	Shared concepts	Universal concepts	Shared concepts
9	Logistical topics	Universal concepts	Logistical topics
10	Project work sessions	Universal concepts	Project work sessions
11	Project work sessions	Universal concepts	Project work sessions
12	Project work sessions	Project work sessions	Project work sessions
13	Project work sessions	Project work sessions	Project work sessions
14	Project work sessions	Project work sessions	Project work sessions
15	Project work sessions	Logistical topics	Project work sessions

- Logistical topics (all 5 sections together)
- Threshold concepts (solo section meetings)
- Universal concepts (all 5 sections together)
- Shared concepts (2 or 3 sections together)
- Project work sessions

## Key considerations

### Time intensive

- Planning should start months in advance
- Weekly planning and coordination meetings ensures communication between instructors
- Structured course management system

### Establish shared context co-requisite course

- Ties together instruction and guest expertise
- Fosters relationships between topic section concepts
- Shared foundation for interrogation of ideas

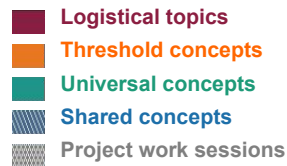
### Instruction team

- Breadth of expertise and disciplines required
- Limit team size and number of topics
- Teaching assistants exceptionally valuable resource
- Relationship, motivation, and investment matter

### Student expectations

- Communicate course structure clearly and repeatedly to students
- Set expectations for difference in course experience
- Set expectations for difference in expert opinions

# WORKSHOP TIMELINE



Week	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
1	Logistical topics	Universal concepts	Threshold concepts
2	Threshold concepts	Universal concepts	Threshold concepts
3	Threshold concepts	Universal concepts	Threshold concepts
4	Logistical topics	Universal concepts	Logistical topics
5	Logistical topics	Universal concepts	Logistical topics
6	Logistical topics	Universal concepts	Shared concepts
7	Shared concepts	Universal concepts	Shared concepts
8	Shared concepts	Universal concepts	Shared concepts
9	Logistical topics	Universal concepts	Logistical topics
10	Project work sessions	Universal concepts	Project work sessions
11	Project work sessions	Universal concepts	Project work sessions
12	Project work sessions	Project work sessions	Project work sessions
13	Project work sessions	Project work sessions	Project work sessions
14	Project work sessions	Project work sessions	Project work sessions
15	Project work sessions	Logistical topics	Project work sessions

## SHARED THEME

- STEP 1**
- Identify **global issues of interest** to the group
  - Discuss connections between disciplines of the group
  - Identify global issue that encompasses inquiry for all disciplines in the group
  - Theme: **Climate Change**

### LOGISTICAL TOPICS

**Discuss and list logistical topics (3-5 topics)**  
 Topics necessary to engage in addressing complex problems. *Examples: literature searching skills, economic theory*

### UNIVERSAL CONCEPTS

**Discuss and list universal concepts (3-5 concepts, up to 10)** Concepts that translate to critical thinking discussions about the common theme. *Examples: ethics, equity*

### THRESHOLD CONCEPTS

**Identify threshold concepts for your individual area of focus (3-5 concepts)**  
 Concepts necessary to understand your selected focus area. *Examples: how to work with data, data privacy*

### SHARED CONCEPTS

**Identify shared concepts for two or more focus areas (3-5 concepts)**  
 Concepts that can be generalized or coupled for more than one focus area. *Examples: student data privacy, employment training/education programs*

## SHARE YOUR COURSE IDEA

- STEP 4**
- The spokesperson for your group should share:
- Title of your course
  - Share one of your universal concepts and how it relates to the theme