SOCIAL EQUITY RESEARCH PACKET
Part of fostering social equity is ensuring that academic research, practices and methodologies are pushing the boundaries of how urban planning can best support underprivileged and underrepresented communities. Within this goal, the Social Equity Working Group has three objectives:

- Partner with universities and professional organizations to provide funding for research that targets social equity in the built environment.
- Encourage the national APA Research Program to prioritize social equity research projects.
- Encourage students to explore these issues in capstone projects, theses, and dissertations.

This research package addresses this last objective. Our hope is that this research package will inspire students to conduct projects on social equity issues by providing research questions, potential partner organizations and literature references. With the support of universities, planning departments and nonprofit organizations, we believe that students can find solutions to our most pressing social equity concerns here in Washington.

Research Questions

The purpose of this research package is to provide the support and inspiration to urban planning students in Washington to help them address social equity concerns within their work.

Below are some questions that can be launching points for your own research regarding the relationship between urban planning and social equity, with a special focus on displacement.

1. Displacement of existing lower-income communities may tend to take place in neighborhoods with certain characteristics, trends and locations. What are metrics, indicators, and conditions that would signal the potential for and start of neighborhood displacement?

2. Redevelopment and gentrification may displace previous residents and business. What are some ways to measure the impact of redevelopment on social equity (i.e. affordability, cultural preservation, access to services etc.)? Is it feasible to use these measurements when issuing development permits?
3. Policy tools may affect how redevelopment projects affect social equity issues. How can financing tools, land-use regulations, ownership transformation, historic preservation and other policies help make redevelopment projects more socially just?

4. Theories on urban form, travel behavior, public health, social psychology, consumer behavior, business location choice, real estate value, stakeholder game, operation management, and so on, have been employed to explain urban developments. What are the advantages and disadvantages of the theories in addressing social equity issues? How can new theories to be developed and existing ones to be adjusted in the context of redevelopment projects?

5. Aside from the economic factors, what are the social and cultural factors associated with gentrification that displace existing communities? How can those social and cultural factors be amended to enable existing communities to feel at home?

6. Affordable commercial real estate is necessary to allow existing businesses to continue operating in the face of gentrification. What are some ways to ensure affordable real estate and how can you balance these methods within a free market system?

7. Geographical Information Systems (GIS) have been increasingly popular in urban planning. How can GIS and geospatial analysis be utilized to monitor, evaluate and predict social equity conditions related to displacement?

8. In addition to quantitative data from censuses, surveys, and remote sensing, qualitative approaches such as storytelling, art and filming can capture detailed elements of displacement. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using quantitative data to research social equity studies in displacement? How will new formats and sources of data allow a better understanding of current issues?

9. Public participation is a popular topic in planning studies and an essential element in planning process. How can participatory actions be optimized for benefiting communities involved in displacement?

**Partner Organizations**

Below are a selection of organizations in the Puget Sound area that are working at the intersection of urban planning and social equity. Some of these organizations might be open to working with students on a thesis or professional project relevant to their mission.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Contact Name</th>
<th>Contact Email</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ArtSpace</td>
<td>Affordable (artist) housing</td>
<td>Kelley Lindquist</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kelley.lingquist@artspace.org">kelley.lingquist@artspace.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HomeSight</td>
<td>Affordable housing</td>
<td>Tony To Exe Director</td>
<td><a href="mailto:tony@homesightwa.org">tony@homesightwa.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Fostering Social Equity Working Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Key Areas</th>
<th>Contact Person(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Seattle Housing Authority                         | Affordable housing             | Anne Fiske-Zuniga  
Deputy Exec Dir. Development  
Anne.FiskeZuniga@seattlehousing.org |
| Seattle Office of Housing                         | Affordable housing             | Steve Walker  
Director  
Steve.Walker@seattle.gov |
| Seattle Department of Neighborhoods               | Community development          | Bernie Matsuno  
Director  
bernie.matsuno@seattle.gov |
| Community Capital Development                     | Economic development           | Josephine Tamayo  
Murray Board President  
info@seattleccd.com |
| Rainier Valley Chamber of Commerce                | Economic development           | E.J. Gong  
Board President  
mail@rainierchamber.com |
| MLK Business Association                          | Economic development           | Julie Pham  
Board Chair  
http://www.mlkba.org/contact/ |
| Mercy Corps Northwest                             | Economic development           | John W. Haines  
Executive Director  
jhaines@mercycorpsnw.org |
| Seattle Office of Economic Development            | Economic development           | Steve Johnson  
Director  
steve.johnson@seattle.gov |
| Rainier Valley Community Development Fund         | Economic development           | Wayne Lau  
Executive Director  
wlausrvcdf.org |
| PolicyLink                                        | Economic and Equity Research   | Angela Glover Blackwell  
Founder and CEO  
Otilia@policylink.org |
| Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition                  | Environmental justice          | James Rasmussen,  
DRCC/TAG Coordinator  
contact@duwamishcleanup.org |
| Washington CASH                                   | Social capital/financing       | Beto Yarce  
Interim Executive Director  
beto@washingtoncash.org |
| Craft 3                                           | Social capital/financing       | John Berdes  
President & CEO  
jberdes@craft3.org |
| Impact Capital                                    | Social capital/financing       | Judith Olsen  
Executive Director  
judith@impactcapital.org |
| HopeLink                                          | Social services, transit       | Lauren Thomas  
CEO  
hopelink@hope-link.org |
| Transit Riders Union                              | Transit advocacy               | General Secretary  
Katie Wilson  
contact@transitriders.org |
| Puget Sound Sage                                  | Labor rights, community       | David West  
Executive Director  
dwest@pugetsoundsage.org |
| Seattle Department of Planning and Development    | Equity in Comprehensive Planning | Tom Hauger  
Comprehensive Plan Manager  
tom.hauger@seattle.gov |
| Congress for the New Urbanism, Cascadia Chapter   | Inclusive walkable, livable    | Bill Lennertz  
Board President  
cnucinfo@cnucascadia.org |
| Office of Housing Community Cornerstones          | Community Development          | Nora Liu  
Chair Multicultural Planning  
Ryan Curren  
Chair TOD Funding  
http://www.seattle.gov/housing/Cornerstones/default.htm |

### Sample Introductory Email

Hello,

I am Anne Fiske-Zuniga, Deputy Executive Director of the Seattle Housing Authority. The goal of our organization is to provide affordable housing for all residents of Seattle. We believe that everyone deserves a safe and affordable place to live.

I am writing to introduce you to the Fostering Social Equity Working Group, which is a coalition of organizations working towards social equity in our community. Our group includes organizations from various sectors, such as housing, development, economic development, community development, environmental justice, social capital/financing, labor rights, transit advocacy, and more.

Our working group is committed to fostering social equity and improving the quality of life for all residents of Seattle. We aim to address the complex issues facing our community and work towards creating a more equitable and just society.

If you are interested in learning more about our group or joining our efforts, please let me know. We would love to have you as part of our team.

Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

Anne Fiske-Zuniga  
Deputy Executive Director  
Anne.FiskeZuniga@seattlehousing.org
We encourage you to reach out to the organizations listed above to assess their capacity for partnering with students. Feel free to use the sample introductory email below when making initial contact with these organizations.

Dear (ORGANIZATION/CONTACT),

My name is (YOUR NAME) and I am a student at the (UNIVERSITY). I understand that one of the goals of the Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association is to connect university research to the needs of organizations working to advance social equity in our region.

Since (ORGANIZATION) is doing important work at the intersection of urban planning and social equity, I was wondering if you were open to partnering with urban planning university students looking to do independent research or a thesis related to your mission.

Organizations can partner with students in a variety of ways. For example, (ORGANIZATION) can simply provide data or provide students with research oversight.

I’d love to describe the mutually beneficial possibilities of partnering in more detail. Are you free for a phone call or coffee date on (DAY)?

I hope to hear from you soon.

(NAME)

(CONTACT INFORMATION)