Capstone Project Offerings: Spring 2023
Requirements:

- Register for MDP 5100 in Fall 2022: Capstone Preparation Workshop (or PA 5080 for MPA, MPP, MHR, MS-STEP or MURP students) must be taken in fall 2022 for all spring 2023 capstone sections.
- Register for MDP 5200, Section 001 in Spring 2023. If you are an MPA, MPP, MHR, MS-STEP or MURP student, a section of PA 8081 will be created for you for registration.
- All degree programs (MDP, MHR, MPA, MPP, MS-STEP, & MURP) are eligible for Development Practice projects.

Project Descriptions:

1) Development of a Green Growth Action Plan for Ssi Bukunja Sub County in Buikwe District, Central Uganda
   - Client: Regenerate Africa
   - Regenerate Africa wishes to provide technical support to Ssi Sub County, Uganda in the development of a Green Growth Action Plan to steer the community to sustainable development through Green growth pathways. At the national level, perhaps the work of the students might conduct a number of multi-stakeholder engagements explore pathways and barriers to Green Growth Development Strategy full scale implementation. We propose to the students that a pilot Subnational or District Local Government i.e. Buikwe District (Ssi-bukunja subcounty) is picked to showcase localization and implementation of Green Growth Development Strategy. This means that students would engage key national and sub-national stakeholders in a participatory process of developing localized/subnational/district implementation roadmap/action plan of the Green Growth strategy that includes sequence interventions for the short term, medium term and long term. This will also include proposing sub-national/district green growth financing mechanisms and windows.
   - Green Growth Action Plan Project Brief
   - Public engagement: Direct Engagement with public/community
   - Focus on equity and/or social justice

2) Documenting and understanding the linkage and interconnectedness of SRHR/FP, climate change resilience and adaptive capacity as well as impact of climate change to SRHR/FP in the Lake Victoria Basin, using Ssi Bukunja Sub County, Buikwe District as a case study
   - Client: Regenerate Africa
   - There are underlying policy and institutional structure barriers that limit effective integration, scale-up and Institutionalization of Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights (SRHR) into Uganda’s Climate change agenda and actions at different scales, i.e. community, local and national that we need to explore, document, disseminate and inform constructive policy and practice dialogue on SRHR/FP+Climate. Across E. Africa., there is also still low exposure of the FP/SRHR practitioners, advocates, policy makers, actors and stakeholders at country, and regional level to understand the intrinsic linkage between climate change and SRHR, climate processes,
protocols, and key decision makers within the climate adaptation and resilience community. The fact that most of climate adaptation funds emphasize the need for adaptation activities to be country-driven, the best opportunity for funding FP/RH is to integrate it within multisectoral adaptation proposals once we have well documented evidence for this. The findings from students’ work are intended to increase opportunities for the FP/RH community in justifying their proposed development interventions as adaptation interventions hence increasing the likelihood of access adaptation funding as part of national and international multisectoral adaptation projects. The findings will increase multi-stakeholders’/actors’ exposure, awareness and understanding of the SRHR and climate change interconnections, and the underlying barriers for institutionalization and integration of SRHR in the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Processes and climate resilience actions.

- **SRHR/FP+Climate Project Brief**
- Public engagement: Direct Engagement with public/community
- Focus on equity and/or social justice

3) **Planning for integrated natural resource management in Honduras**

- **Client**: Rainforest Alliance
- We are currently in the process of working with Rainforest Alliance to expand the work we have been doing in Guatemala to forest communities on the Atlantic coast of Honduras. As we expand into Honduras, an important early step will be to develop an understanding of the context and relevant history of conservation and development in the region. These foundational efforts will include a literature review, stakeholder engagement and other learning-oriented activities geared toward project design and development.

- **Rainforest Alliance Project Brief**
- Public engagement: Client Engagement Only
- Focus on equity and/or social justice

4) **Advisory Services in Agriculture**

- **Client**: International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)
- The current project is solicited by the IISD Economic Law and Policy (ELP) Program. The ELP Program seeks assistance with mid-term external evaluation of its intervention, aiming at providing high-quality advice to governments to strengthen countries’ food security and livelihoods and to improve the quality of public and private investment in agriculture and food systems, while protecting land rights and responsibly managing natural resources. ELP Program seeks to engage students for mid-term evaluation of the program activities in two countries. The goal of the evaluation is 1) to collect the data on the progress towards the intermediate and impact-level outcomes; 2) to analyze the challenges and obstacles towards outcomes achievement as well as the best practices and provide recommendations for program adaptation. **International travel is possible for this project.**

- **ELP Program Project Brief**
- Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities
5) **Investment Advisory Services**

- Client: International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)
- The current project is solicited by the IISD Economic Law and Policy (ELP) Program. The ELP Program seeks assistance with mid-term external evaluation of its interventions in the area of Investment Law and Policy. IISD works with governments and civil society to develop and improve legal and policy tools focusing on the critical linkage between investment and sustainable development. We look for and provide new approaches to ensure that investment law and policy advance environmentally sound investment that generates broad socioeconomic benefits. An integral part of our investment work includes the provision of advisory services for countries to support their work on developing new legal tools and frameworks for investment. ELP Program seeks to engage students for mid-term evaluation of the program activities in two countries. The goal of the evaluation is 1) to collect the data on the progress towards the intermediate and impact-level outcomes; 2) to analyze the challenges and obstacles towards outcomes achievement as well as the best practices and provide recommendations for program adaptation. **International travel is possible for this project.**

- [Investment Law and Policy Project Brief](#)
- Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities

6) **Maati Koo. Fruit Trees for Schools + Organizational Strategy**

- Client: Maati Koo
- The Maati Koo ("My Family" in Oromifa) is a recently founded NGO that supports food sovereignty efforts by rural schools in Ethiopia. Schools in the region own large swaths of land ranging from 10 to 40 acres. Maati Koo strives to increase the added value of these school lands and to enhance educational opportunities in the process. For the capstone project, we are seeking a team of diversely trained students to support the development of Matti Koo’s organizational structure and strategic growth plan and to identify and develop critical areas for technical programming, such as farmer field schools, community nutrition education and related topics.

- [Maati Koo Project Brief](#)
- Public engagement: Client Engagement Only
- **This is a student-initiated project** open for additional team members.

**Questions:**

For any questions regarding projects in the Development Practice section, please contact Dave Wilsey at [dwilsey@umn.edu](mailto:dwilsey@umn.edu).
Requirements:

- Register for PA 5080 in Fall 2022: Capstone Preparation Workshop (or MDP 5100 for MDP students) must be taken in fall 2022 for all spring 2023 capstone sections.
- Register for PA 8081, Section 014 in Spring 2023. If you are an MDP student, a section of MDP 5200 will be created for you for registration.
- All degree programs (MDP, MHR, MPA, MPP, MS-STEP, & MURP) are eligible for Human Rights projects.

Project Descriptions:

1) **Prison Nursery Project**
   - Client: Children of Incarcerated Caregivers
   - The Prison Nursery Project (PNP) focuses on issues related to children living in prisons with their incarcerated parents. The capstone project team will contribute to the Prison Nursery Project by assisting with country reports by researching policies and practices related to children living with their caregivers in prisons.
   - Anticipated data collection method(s): Research methodologies may include literature review and interviews with experts and non-governmental organizations.
   - [Prison Nursery Project Brief](#)
   - Public engagement: Direct Engagement with public/community
   - Focus on equity and/or social justice

2) **Designing culturally adapted indicators for indigenous health care providers from a Human Rights perspective**
   - Client: Erchichi Jai Hospital, Embera-Dobida Indigenous Community
   - The IPS Indígena Erchichi Jai (EH) is a health institution belonging to the indigenous cabildos of the Choco region of Colombia, whose mission is to develop health promotion activities, disease prevention, and primary medical care. The administrative and financial accountability of the EH is based on indicators whose conceptual frame includes neither the values nor intersectional vulnerabilities of its populations. This project is aimed to equip the Hospital to challenge the existing unfair policy of measuring the entire indigenous health care system with foreign indicators by asking: "What international standards should be considered for designing culturally adapted qualitative and quantitative indicators for indigenous health care providers from a Human Rights Perspective?"
   - It is preferred that participants have some evaluation background, experience in monitoring mechanisms, and some knowledge of human rights. Spanish is not mandatory but preferred.
   - Anticipated data collection method(s): literature review and interviews with experts
   - [Erchichi Jai Hospital Project Brief](#)
   - Public engagement: Public Engagement Design but not execution / Indirect Engagement
   - Focus on equity and/or social justice
3) **International Financial Institutions (IFI) obligations to consider and respect human rights during interactions with member states**
   - Client: UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)
   - OHCHR staff are interested in understanding how we can better use economic tools and institutions to promote the protection, respect and advancement of human rights. International Financial Institutions (IFIs) are financial institutions that have been established by more than one country and are subject to international law. United Nations member states have legal obligations related to Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ESCR) and these obligations form part of the rule of law of the country where the IFI is operational, how is it possible to ringfence investments in health, education, social protection and other ESCR? This project will be asking “How can IFIs actively seek to enhance the level of respect for human rights?”
   - Anticipated data collection method(s): interviews with experts and human rights stakeholders and review of currently existing literature
   - **OHCHR Project Brief**
   - Public engagement: Public Engagement Design but not execution / Indirect Engagement
   - Focus on equity and/or social justice

4) **Trauma-Informed Evaluation for Domestic Violence Community Services**
   - Client: Cornerstone Advocacy Services
   - Capturing the important work that domestic violence advocates do and the impact that they have can be a challenge. To do that in a way that is sensitive to the trauma the participant has experienced and avoids causing further harm is that much more difficult. Cornerstone would like to explore new methods of evaluation and reimagine how we capture the work and varied program interventions that our team employs in a more trauma-informed way.
   - Anticipated data collection method(s):
   - **Trauma-Informed Evaluation Project Brief**
   - Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities
   - Focus on equity and/or social justice

5) **Building capacity for Latinx immigrant’s labor rights as agricultural workers around the St. Cloud area**
   - Client: Fe y Justicia
   - This project will focus on capacity building for the organization Fe Y Justicia. The main objective is to improve their storytelling efforts. Storytelling is a vital component of human rights and social justice work as it is through telling our stories that we engage stakeholders; build community and campaign for change. We will work with Fe Y Justicia to gather information from their members, improve their website and develop a funding strategy. **Travel to the St. Cloud area may be required**, **Spanish language skills are beneficial but not required**.
   - Anticipated data collection method(s): Interviews
   - **Fe y Justicia Project Brief**
   - Public engagement: Direct Engagement with public/community
   - Focus on equity and/or social justice
   - **This is a student-initiated project** open for additional team members.
Questions:
For any questions regarding projects in the Human Rights section, please contact Amelia Shindelar at shin0148@umn.edu.
Requirements:

- Register for PA 5080 in Fall 2022: Capstone Preparation Workshop (or MDP 5100 for MDP students) must be taken in fall 2022 for all spring 2023 capstone sections.
- Register for PA 8081, Section 008 in Spring 2023. If you are an MDP student, a section of MDP 5200 will be created for you for registration.
- All degree programs (MDP, MHR, MPA, MPP, MS-STEP, & MURP) are eligible for Global Policy projects.

Project Descriptions:

1) Keeping the Heat off the Street: Trends in Radiological Material Security Legislation
- Client: Stimson Center
- This project offers the opportunity to work with a leading expert in implementation of UN nonproliferation measures. In this project, the Stimson Center's Partnerships in Proliferation Prevention program seeks a policy paper and associated briefing that identifies trends in UN member state legislation promulgated in 2018 or later relating to radioactive material under IAEA agreements. The policy paper would focus on gathering quantitative evidence, in the form of domestic legal measures put into force by UN member states, to argue a correlation between international radiological and nuclear security events and national implementation of radiological security measures.
- There are no travel requirements, but students may have the opportunity to present the project in person in Washington, DC, in May 2023.
- Anticipated data collection method(s): The research will be conducted via desk research, gathering both quantitative and qualitative information about arms control implementation.
- Radiological Security Project Brief
- Public engagement: Client Engagement Only

2) Examining the link between women’s political empowerment and economic engagement in the Middle East and North Africa
- Client: International Republican Institute (IRI) Middle East Team
- This project offers students the opportunity to work with IRI's senior advisor for the Middle East and North Africa (who is a Humphrey graduate) on a project that researches the linkages between women's political empowerment/engagement and women's economic participation/inclusion in a select group of countries in the Middle East and North Africa. The countries examined and full scope will be developed in partnership with the client, and may depend upon the size of the team. Please see full description attached.
- Anticipated data collection method(s): Students will use mostly qualitative methods to research and gather information for analysis. Past capstones have also added some quantitative analysis because of student interest.
- IRI Project Brief
3) Assessing Reception of Afghan and Ukrainian Immigrants and Refugees in Minnesota

- Client: Minneapolis Office of Refugee and Immigrant Affairs
- This proposal invites students to explore how the Minnesota experience with large scale resettlement of individuals from abroad beginning in August/September 2021 has helped us develop a more comprehensive welcoming infrastructure in the state and in our cities, one that includes robust welcoming supports for immigrants, regardless of immigration status held upon arrival. How does a snapshot of this current welcoming effort compare with previous periods of large-scale migration to Minnesota? What are necessary components of successful immigrant and refugee resettlement and inclusion? This proposal anticipates preparation of a report to include information about what is working, how innovative collaborations have developed over the course of the last year, what can be replicated in welcoming new communities, and where gaps continue to exist.
- Anticipated data collection method(s): Students will use qualitative and quantitative methods to gather information about how newly arrived immigrants and refugees have been received and assisted by various agencies and organizations.
- Potential for public engagement opportunities
- Focus on equity and/or social justice

Questions:
For any questions regarding projects in the Global Policy section, please contact Mary Curtin at mtcurtin@umn.edu.
Requirements:

- Register for PA 5080 in Fall 2022: Capstone Preparation Workshop (or MDP 5100 for MDP students) must be taken in fall 2022 for all spring 2023 capstone sections.
- Register for PA 8081, Section 012 in Spring 2023. If you are an MDP student, a section of MDP 5200 will be created for you for registration.
- All degree programs (MDP, MHR, MPA, MPP, MS-STEP, & MURP) are eligible for Science, Technology & Environmental Policy projects.

Project Descriptions:

1) **Strategies to Expand Water Quality Certification Participation**
   - **Client:** Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)
   - The MDA oversees the Minnesota Agricultural Water Quality Certification Program (MAWQCP or the Program) which is designed to attract farmers to adopt farming practices that improve the quality of the water that soaks through or runs off the land. A number of Minnesota farms have become Water Quality Certified. However, Minnesota is not meeting its water quality goals and wants to have more farms adopt best practices for water quality through the certification program. The MDA is considering ideas for increasing the number of farms that participate in MAWQCP, including giving farmers a property tax credit as an additional financial incentive to participate.
   - **Anticipated data collection method(s):** The capstone team will interview agency staff to develop an understanding of the existing MAWQCP and of the challenges involved in attracting more farmers to the program. The team will review existing information that provides insight into the decision process for farmers on whether to enroll in the Program and may want to consider interviews or other data gathering approaches to better understand those decisions as a foundation for making recommendations ways to increase participation and the potential effectiveness of a tax credit.
   - [Water Quality Project Brief](#)
   - **Public engagement:** Potential for public engagement opportunities

2) **Minnesota Soil Health Pilot Program Planning**
   - **Client:** Minnesota Department of Agriculture (MDA)
   - The MDA is seeking Humphrey student assistance in meeting its obligation to develop a plan for improving soil health on Minnesota farms. The Minnesota Legislature in 2022 authorized the creation of a pilot grant program to promote the adoption of soil health practices and directed the MDA to develop a plan for the program. The Humphrey School capstone team would assist on aspects of the planning work and make recommendations to the MDA for potential inclusion in the plan the MDA must submit by the end of 2023.
   - **Anticipated data collection method(s):** The legislation requires the MDA to consult with a variety of agencies and advocacy groups. The team will likely be asked to conduct interviews with staff of those organizations as part of the MDA consultation process. The team will also likely
research other soil health initiatives to identify best practices that can be incorporated in the MDA plan.

- Soil Health Project Brief
- Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities

3) **Enhancing Low Income Energy Conservation Programs in a Cooperative Electric Utility**
   - Client: Connexus Energy
   - Connexus Energy would like to work with a capstone team to make recommendations on income-qualified programs through the Conservation Improvement Program (CIP) in light of the recent passage of the Energy Conservation and Optimization (ECO) Act. Connexus Energy has historically worked with Client Assistance Program (CAP)/Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP) agencies to provide funding for low-income. Connexus believes that more conservation opportunities could be achieved. The team would work with CAP/WAP agencies to identify barriers that may affect these programs and identify needs and capabilities for serving low-income communities in Connexus Energy’s service territory.
   - Anticipated data collection method(s): The team will need to understand the ECO Act and other laws that affect utility conservation improvement and energy efficiency programs. It is likely that the team will interview Connexus staff, community assistance program staff and contractors that perform the energy efficiency work. There may be past research on barriers facing individuals or families eligible for energy savings services. The team may also conduct interviews or focus groups with low income customers after consultation with the sponsor.
   - Connexus Energy Project Brief
   - Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities
   - Focus on equity and/or social justice
   - This is a student-initiated project open for additional team members.

4) **City-School Collaboration for Tree Canopy Enhancement**
   - Client: Minnetonka Forestry Department
   - The City of Minnetonka Forestry Department is interested in identifying strategies and tactics it can use to work with schools and school districts to partner in expanding shade tree canopy on district property in the City. The strategies developed by the project team could also be applicable in other cities. A secondary goal of the project would be identifying ways that school-city partnerships could engage students and improve their understanding of sustainability and climate change mitigation. The research would also involve identifying successful efforts in other jurisdictions.
   - Anticipated data collection method(s): Interviews with city and school district staff; interviews with other stakeholders as identified by the sponsor and student team; internet and library research on city and school collaborations on tree management in other jurisdictions, including international examples.
   - Minnetonka City-School Forestry Project Brief
   - Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities
5) **Sustainable Strategies for Cities Reusing Lumber Milled from Waste Wood**
   - **Client:** Minnetonka Forestry Department
   - The City of Minnetonka Forestry Department is interested in developing a plan for sustaining a city practice of removing diseased or “risk” trees, milling the lumber and reusing the milled material in public or private projects. Cities often outsource responsibility for handling or disposing of wood waste to contractors. Milling waste wood for lumber is an alternative to landfilling or burning it. Collecting and milling the material involves costs to the city which may not be sustainable absent new strategies for recovering some or all of the costs.
   - **Anticipated data collection method(s):** Interviews with city staff; interviews with other stakeholders as identified by the sponsor and student team; interviews with personnel at other cities or organizations dealing with waste wood such as Wood from the Hood; internet and library research on city tree waste management in other jurisdictions, including international examples.
   - [Minnetonka Waste Lumber Project Brief](#)
   - **Public engagement:** Potential for public engagement opportunities

6) **Opportunities, Barriers, and Application of Distributed Energy Resources for Minnesota Cooperatives**
   - **Client:** Great River Energy
   - Great River Energy (GRE) is a generation and transmission cooperative owned by 28 members that are themselves electric distribution cooperatives in Minnesota. They serve roughly one-third of Minnesotans. GRE traditionally has produced energy at large energy facilities such as coal and gas plants or wind farms in ND and MN. GRE is transitioning to primarily wind and other renewable energy sources that are utility scale. However, distributed energy resources such as roof top solar, residential batteries, or energy efficiency are potentially significant contributors to energy production and resilient energy grids. GRE wants a capstone team to identify the barriers to and opportunities involved in expanding distributed energy resources. GRE is also interested in recommendations for a framework that would help it to evaluate resource opportunities and a pilot project for implementation.
   - **Anticipated data collection method(s):** The capstone team should identify distributed energy resource programs implemented by electric utilities in the United States and other countries and determine the barriers and opportunities revealed in those programs. The team would conduct interviews with GRE staff to obtain their understanding of Minnesota barriers and opportunities. In consultation with GRE, the team would also interview member cooperative staff. They may also interview selected energy customers that have implemented distributed energy resources.
   - [Distributed Energy Project Brief](#)
   - **Public engagement:** Potential for public engagement opportunities

7) **Strategies for Achieving Energy Efficiency Potential for Electric Cooperatives**
   - **Client:** Great River Energy
   - Great River Energy (GRE) is a generation and transmission cooperative owned by 28 members that are themselves electric distribution cooperatives in Minnesota. They serve roughly one-third of Minnesotans. Through Minnesota state policy, GRE and its members are required to save 1.5% of energy sales each year through strategies that encompass low income programs,
efficient fuel switching, efficiency, and energy conservation. GRE is seeking the assistance of a capstone team to understand strategies that GRE and its members can implement to meet or exceed the state target. They want to consider the broad range of what energy efficiency can include. They are also interested in discovering how GRE’s members view energy efficiency and the barriers to and opportunities to be found in achieving greater energy efficiency.

- Anticipated data collection method(s): The capstone team will conduct internet and library research to develop background information on energy efficiency concepts and strategies that have been advanced by electric industry members and nonprofit advocates. They may also use interviews of GRE and member executives to identify energy efficiency strategies most suited to the customers of GRE. In consultation with GRE, the team might consider conducting a survey of member cooperative staff and or board members to discover their views on efficiency.

- Energy Efficiency Project Brief
- Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities

8) Equitable Systems Change Actions for a Science Museum
- Client: Science Museum of Minnesota
- The Science Museum of Minnesota is a large and important science education institution in St. Paul. Its mission statement says: “We exist to... Turn on the science: Inspire learning. Inform policy. Improve lives.” It has committed itself to actively working to undo systems of injustice and inequity. The Museum is seeking assistance from a Humphrey student team to identify high impact interventions that will contribute to significant equitable systems change. The team would consider work the Museum is already doing and develop, with guidance from the sponsor, a framework for evaluating interventions the Museum could undertake and, using that framework, make recommendations to the Museum for system change interventions.

- Anticipated data collection method(s): The team will gather information about current programs and ideas for new initiatives from Museum staff interviews. With the guidance of the sponsor, it may also conduct community interviews to obtain additional ideas and evaluation approaches from under-recognized members of the community. Internet and library research would be useful for identifying how other similar institutions have engaged in justice and systems change work and how critics of such institutions have framed their analyses.

- Science Museum Justice Project Brief
- Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities
- Focus on equity and/or social justice
- This is a student-initiated project open for additional team members.

9) Integrating Climate Change in Minnesota Watershed Planning
- Client: Board of Water and Soil Resources
- Minnesota is in the middle of developing plans for watershed management statewide under the heading of “One Watershed, One Plan”. Although watershed planning has typically not incorporated climate change into the planning process, planning groups are increasingly recognizing the importance of this issue. The Board of Water and Soil Resources oversees the planning process and is asking a capstone team to identify best practices for incorporating climate change mitigation and adaptation and increasing watershed resilience into the watershed plans. In 2022, a STEP capstone team started work on this topic and produced a
report Exploring Policy Recommendations for Promoting Climate Resilient Watersheds. This project would build on that work. BWSR is especially interested in more work on the recommendation to provide technical resources.

- Anticipated data collection method(s): The team should consider the research literature on technical tools such as predictive models that could be useful for planning and investigate watershed planning processes in other jurisdictions that could serve as potential models for best practices. The team may also need to interview local government officials and others who are involved in watershed planning to understand better the survey responses reported in 2022.
  
- BWSR Project Brief
- Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities

Questions:
For any questions regarding projects in the Science, Technology & Environmental Policy section, please contact Steve Kelley at kelle644@umn.edu.
Requirements:

- Register for PA 5080 in Fall 2022: Capstone Preparation Workshop (or MDP 5100 for MDP students) must be taken in fall 2022 for all spring 2023 capstone sections.
- Register for PA 8081, Section 004 in Spring 2023. If you are an MDP student, a section of MDP 5200 will be created for you for registration.
- All degree programs (MDP, MHR, MPA, MPP, MS-STEP, & MURP) are eligible for Social Policy projects.

Project Descriptions:

1) Expanding Access to Extended Foster Care for Youth Age 18-21
   - Client: Foster Advocates
   - This capstone will document the barriers to accessing Extended Foster Care for youth ages 18-21 in Minnesota and make recommendations for reform. Activities may include analysis of data from the National Youth in Transition Study, focus group interviews with young adults eligible for extended Foster Care, and a research scan of best practices in other states. The results from this study will be used to inform next steps for advocacy to reform the foster care system, and it will inform key state and legislative partners.
   - Anticipated data collection method(s):
     - Extended Foster Care Project Brief
   - Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities
   - Focus on equity and/or social justice

2) Investing in Ending Single Adult Homelessness
   - Client: Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness
   - Hennepin County, like the rest of the nation, has substantially expanded and reoriented housing services for homeless single adults, using resources from federal COVID stimulus funding. This project will assess the impacts of these changes in Hennepin County, using a combination of analysis of administrative data, interviews with program staff, and assessments of efforts elsewhere in the country. This project will be used to refine efforts to reduce single adult homelessness, and to build the evidence base to support continued investments in these programs.
   - Anticipated data collection method(s): Analysis of administrative data, Homeless Management Information data, and data from the Point in Time Count on Homelessness; interviews with key program staff and stakeholders.
   - Single Adult Homelessness Project Brief
   - Public engagement: Public Engagement Design but not execution / Indirect Engagement
   - Focus on equity and/or social justice
3) Assessing the Costs and Benefits of Ending Veteran Homelessness in Minnesota
   - Client: Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans (MACV)
   - This project will document Minnesota’s efforts to end veteran homelessness, and will assess the potential costs and benefits of current and future efforts to eliminate Veterans homelessness. Key activities include analysis of data from the Veterans Homeless data registry on program services, shelter use, housing outcomes, and entry into jails, review of the literature to document other potential costs and benefits of ending Veterans homelessness, and interviews with key program stakeholders. This project will inform MACV in designing strategy and communicating with key stakeholders.
   - Anticipated data collection method(s): Analysis of administrative data, interviews with stakeholders, literature review
   - Veteran Homelessness Project Brief
   - Focus on equity and/or social justice

4) Assessment of Rule 20.01 of the Minnesota Rules of Criminal Procedure - Ramsey County, MN
   - Client: Integrated Health and Justice for Ramsey County
   - This project will examine gaps that exist within the current Minnesota Rule 20 process in Ramsey County to restore competency after a person has been found incapable of standing trial and identify equitable and restorative solutions for competency restoration. This project will document how the current system operates, examine barriers to competency restoration, and make recommendations for improvement. Key activities may include collection and analysis of administrative data on current practices and outcomes of placements, analysis of guidance provided by the Minnesota Department of Human Services and the Minnesota Community Competency Restoration Task Force, interviews with County Case Managers and Community Organizations, and a research scan of best practices and policies from other jurisdictions. While there are no required skills, experience with quantitative data analysis, qualitative data analysis, and/or experience with the Criminal Justice or Mental Health systems in Minnesota would be useful.
   - Anticipated data collection method(s): Analysis of administrative data, interviews with case managers and community organizations, review of literature and policy documents
   - Assessment of Rule 20.01 Project Brief
   - Focus on equity and/or social justice
   - This is a student-initiated project open for additional team members.

5) Safe Communities Violence Reduction Project
   - Client: Hennepin County Health and Human Services Safe Communities Division
   - Hennepin County has established a new division that leads the County's violence reduction efforts, manages the on-going violence reduction strategies and develops a long-term coordination with other county programming focused on reducing disparities (e.g. workforce development, mental health / additional strategies) and violence prevention. They would like the students to explore, describe and synthesize how cities within Hennepin impacted by gun violence address, form partnership alignment and accountability measures, and investigate best
practices among cities nationwide to form recommendations on how to respond to the identified gaps. Stakeholder analysis in the form of a Power Interest Grid would be a "stretch" outcome of student work.

- Anticipated data collection method(s): Review of documents, interviews with key stakeholders in Hennepin County, and scan of literature from national networks such as Cities United (CitiesUnited.org), National Offices of Violence Prevention Network (OVPnetwork.org), and Group Violence Intervention / National Network for Safe Communities (NNSCommunities.org).

  - Safe Communities Project Brief
  - Public engagement: Public Engagement Design but not execution / Indirect Engagement
  - Focus on equity and/or social justice

6) Social Return on Investment in Alongside Network

- Client: Alongside Network
- This capstone will partner with Alongside Network, a national start-up nonprofit organization based in Minneapolis. Alongside is working to shift the system of care for families who have a child with a life-threatening illness or injury, such that care for their mental health is integrated throughout their experience. This project will provide a qualitative evaluation of the early impacts of their Take a Breath program, which provides additional mental health and social services to families facing serious childhood illness. They will use the results from this evaluation to help them scale in the form of partnerships with pediatric hospital systems and insurance companies. **Please note that IRB may be required, based on the use of human subjects.**

- Anticipated data collection method(s): A literature review, interviews with key program facilitators, qualitative interviews with program participants and parents/caregivers of children who experienced a life-threatening illness or injury but did not have access to program services

  - Alongside Network Project Brief
  - Public engagement: Direct Engagement with public/community

Questions:

For any questions regarding projects in the Social Policy section, please contact Maria Hanratty at hanra003@umn.edu.
Transportation Planning and Policy – Lyssa Leitner

PA 8081, Section 011: Tuesdays from 6:00-8:45 pm

Requirements:

- Register for PA 5080 in Fall 2022: Capstone Preparation Workshop (or MDP 5100 for MDP students) must be taken in fall 2022 for all spring 2023 capstone sections.
- Register for PA 8081, Section 011 in Spring 2023. If you are an MDP student, a section of MDP 5200 will be created for you for registration.
- All degree programs (MDP, MHR, MPA, MPP, MS-STEP, & MURP) are eligible for Transportation projects.

Project Descriptions:

1) Feasibility of Electric Car Sharing in a Suburban Environment
   - Client: City of Edina
   - Edina’s newly passed Climate Action Plan includes goals to reduce community-wide vehicle miles traveled by 7% by 2030, and increase battery electric vehicle utilization to 25% of community-wide rolling stock. The City is also committed to prioritizing low-income household transportation opportunities. To these ends, Edina would like to explore the feasibility of an electric car-sharing service in a suburban environment, including how such a service might provide transportation opportunities for low-income households in the community and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Edina's Mayor is on the Steering Committee for the National Climate Mayors Network so this work will be impactful for the city and could impact suburban environments nationwide. This is a Resilient Communities Project.
   - Anticipated data collection method(s): Mostly qualitative with some GIS
   - Edina Car Sharing Project Brief
   - Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities
   - Focus on equity and/or social justice

2) Employer Fare Program Assessment
   - Client: Metro Transit
   - In this post-Covid world, hybrid work schedules comprising various days of remote and in-office work seem to be here to stay. This change in commuting has posed a challenge to transit agencies nationwide, resulting in a decline in transit use for work commutes. In addition, commute patterns in the Twin Cities have changed and many parking vendors have lowered their rates making driving alone a more attractive option for commuters. As a result, Metro Transit is experiencing a decline in participation in and usage of its premier employer-based transit fare product, Metro Pass. The final report from this project will define the new challenges to both the employer and the employee to adopt transit as their in-office commute choice and propose changes to the existing employer-based transit fare products and services offered at Metro Transit that will increase adoption of transit for use on in person workdays. The research and analysis for this project may include but is not limited to:
     i) A nationwide peer agency review of transit agency approaches to solving the hybrid-work commute. What pricing models currently exist for employer passes that address the changes
in commute patterns? Have the agencies adopted any new services or pass pricing structures to enhance the offering of transit to hybrid workers?

ii) A review and analysis of datasets of local transit use and current Metro Pass use and trends.

iii) A review of related changes such as parking prices, traffic patterns and the price of gas, which may impact a commuters mode choice in a hybrid-work environment.

iv) An interview with our agency Finance Director to understand financial considerations regarding pricing of pass products.

- Anticipated data collection method(s): Qualitative with an opportunity for financial analysis
- Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities

### 3) Evaluating Future Proactive Traffic Safety Treatments

- **Client: Minneapolis**
- Minneapolis is seeking a $30 million federal Safe Streets for All grant to implement proactive traffic safety treatments on up to 110 miles of High Injury Streets and other priority locations. This grant is part of the City’s Vision Zero effort to eliminate traffic deaths and severe injuries. In this project, students will help support future implementation of this or a future grant with data collection, analysis, and recommendations. This project may include the following tasks for all or a subset of streets in the study: data collection and detailed inventory of existing conditions; crash data analysis; interviews with relevant City, County, and MnDOT staff; and evaluation of feasibility of different potential safety treatments. **One team member with an engineering background would be preferred.**

- Anticipated data collection method(s): Qualitative, crash data analysis
- [Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program; Lowered speed limits in Minneapolis](https://www.minneapolis.gov/transportation/procurement/)

- Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities

**Questions:**

For any questions regarding projects in the Transportation Planning and Policy section, please contact Lyssa Leitner at leit0056@umn.edu.
Requirements:

- Register for PA 5080 in Fall 2022: Capstone Preparation Workshop (or MDP 5100 for MDP students) must be taken in fall 2022 for all spring 2023 capstone sections.
- Register for PA 8081, Section 006 in Spring 2023. If you are an MDP student, a section of MDP 5200 will be created for you for registration.
- All degree programs (MDP, MHR, MPA, MPP, MS-STEP, & MURP) are eligible for Urban and Regional Planning and Policy projects.

Project Descriptions:

1) **Bloomington Development Impact Analysis**
   - Client: Bloomington Planning/Housing and Redevelopment Authority & Resilient Communities Project
   - The City of Bloomington seeks a return on investment (ROI) analysis of various development types in Bloomington from both a human capital and financial standpoint to inform future land use policies and municipal investments in development. Since the adoption of the Housing Opportunity and Preservation Ordinance in 2019, the City has been more actively investing in the development of housing that is more affordable to the community. In addition, redevelopment projects within Bloomington of all land use types have continued at a steady pace over the last 15 years. The City of Bloomington seeks to analyze the return on the organization’s direct investments in development, specifically multi-family residential developments that emphasize affordability. Two specific developments that emphasize housing affordability would be evaluated at a project level to generate more detailed findings. This project will be undertaken in partnership with the **U of MN’s Resilient Communities Project** (RCP, rcp.umn.edu).
   - Anticipated data collection method(s): Literature review, secondary data analysis, key informant interviews, GIS
   - **Bloomington Development Impact Project Brief**
   - Public engagement: Direct Engagement with public/community Focus on equity and/or social justice

2) **Measurement Matters: Designing and piloting equity-driven evaluation methods to support the City of Bloomington’s strategic plan implementation**
   - Client: City of Bloomington & Resilient Communities Project
   - Historically, suburban municipalities, programs and policies were designed with primarily white, single-home ownership communities in mind, and Bloomington is no exception to this rule or to wanting to repair and move away from this history. With the creation of the Community Outreach and Engagement Division (COED) in 2019, the City of Bloomington sought to increase community engagement efforts and build stronger relationships with residents who had historically been excluded from local decision-making, particularly BIPOC and low-income groups. While committed to these goals for engagement, barrier reduction, communication and
contribution with community, Bloomington lacks a mechanism to assess and evaluate our impacts in these areas in a way that provides staff with timely, actionable feedback to use to inform changes to programs and services. Student effort will be part of creating a set of evaluation strategies and recommendations for ongoing assessment and evaluation efforts to help us measure our performance against the strategic objectives.

- Anticipated data collection method(s): Literature review, secondary data analysis, file reviews, key informant interviews
- **Bloomington Equity Evaluation Project Brief**
- Public engagement: Direct Engagement with public/community

Focus on equity and/or social justice

3) **Keeping our Cool: Metropolitan Council Extreme Heat Update and Assessment**

- Client: Metropolitan Council & Resilient Communities Project
- The Extreme Heat Map Tool shows the land surface temperature during a historic July 2016 heat wave and was created from remote-sensing data (Landsat 8). With 50 years of Landsat satellite data available including land surface temperature data, we wish to explore the spatial and temporal changes in extreme heat faced by our growing and changing region. We also will begin to draw linkages between demographic data and land temperatures to demonstrate the equity and human health considerations with extreme heat. Finally, the Council also wants to upgrade the tool to provide a more interactive experience and allow for better decision-making attributes, the potential for scenario planning, and the inclusion of qualitative data to enhance the user experience. **Use of qualitative methods will be required for this project.**
- Anticipated data collection method(s): Literature review, key informant interviews, focus groups, secondary data analysis, GIS
- **Extreme Heat Project Brief**
- Public engagement: Direct Engagement with public/community

Focus on equity and/or social justice

4) **Internal Capacity Building at the Intersection of Health, Resilience, and Racial Equity**

- Client: Ramsey County / St. Paul Public Health & Resilient Communities Project
- Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, St. Paul–Ramsey County Public Health hosted training sessions for employees focused on building understanding of and capacity to address the impacts of climate change in public health work. Unfortunately, the County's pandemic response efforts resulted in a nearly three-year pause in this work. Students working on this project will collaborate closely with the County's project lead and representatives of each County department to examine department goals, and identify related training topic areas intended to build employee capacity to plan for and address the impacts of climate change. Students will be asked to review training programs and tools created by other public and private entities, with attention focused on effectiveness, and ultimately recommend a path forward for training county employees. Students will also work with the County's project lead and colleagues to identify performance metrics that can be used to measure the success of proposed internal training efforts.
- Anticipated data collection method(s): Literature review, key informant interviews, file research, secondary data analysis, GIS
5) **Hennepin County Pedestrian Studies (three options)**
   - Client: Hennepin County Transportation Planning
   - This project has three potential aspects and could support a team of students for each area. Project areas include: Pedestrian Crossing Evaluation, Multimodal Big Data Evaluation and Sidewalk Maintenance Evaluation. **Database management and GIS will be required** for each.
   - Anticipated data collection method(s): Literature review, key informant interviews, secondary data analysis file research, statistics, GIS
   - **Hennepin County Pedestrian Studies Project Brief**
   - Public engagement: Public Engagement Design but not execution / Indirect Engagement Focus on equity and/or social justice

6) **Redby Livability and Sustainability Plan**
   - Client: Red Lake Nation
   - The Red Lake Nations desires assistance in preparation of a “livability and sustainability” plan for the village of Redby. The plan shall address issues related to community walkability, including the need for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure along Rt. 1 and beautification of the commercial area of Redby, opportunities for installation of green infrastructure, identification and promotion of cultural resources, and other issues identified by the project liaison, the Tribal Council, and residents of Redby. The work may include conceptual design for pedestrian, bicycle, and other infrastructure improvements along Route 1 and proposals for external funding for projects. **This project may require travel to Redby.**
   - Anticipated data collection method(s):
   - **Red Lake Nation Project Brief**
   - Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities

7) **Old Cottage Grove: A Small Area Study**
   - Client: The City of Cottage Grove
   - Old Cottage Grove was founded in 1843 and platted in 1871. As development moves east of Keats Avenue in Cottage Grove, the City would like to ensure there is a plan in place as interest for redevelopment increases. Essentially, the City would like to be able to guide redevelopment and have a better understanding of what this transition might look like.
   - Public engagement: Potential for public engagement opportunities
   - **This is a student-initiated project** open for additional team members.

**Questions:**

For any questions regarding projects in the Urban and Regional Planning and Policy section, please contact Greg Lindsey at linds301@umn.edu.