Tribal Planning at Eastern Washington University: Curricula and Program Content and Structure.

Dick G. Winchell, Ph.D., FAICP. Professor or Urban and Regional Planning, 668 N. Riverpoint, Suite A, Spokane, WA 99202. dwinchell@ewu.edu


Tribal Planning at EWU.

The EWU Tribal Planning Curriculum emphasizes the unique status of tribal governments as sovereign nations, possessing autonomous powers of governance including those recognized through legal structures (sovereignty) and those powers held within the meaning of words in tribal language at the time of contact (inherent sovereignty). These powers are the foundations for American Indian tribal governments, and are specific to individual tribes and bands. The planning process, particularly the tribal comprehensive plan, can be used by tribal governments to develop and document their tribal sovereign powers, particularly with regard to control of lands and land uses, as well as all aspects of community and planning.

This recognition of tribal sovereignty was strongly established at Eastern Washington through the works and insight of early tribal participation in American Indian Studies Programs, notably the works of Elizabeth Cook—Lyn (2007, 2002, 1996) and her on-going editorship and articles found in the Journal Wicazo-Sa: The Red Pencil (1984--date). This model for sovereignty was expanded by Cecil Jose, past director of American Indian Studies at EWU, and working on the editorial board of the journal and contributing articles, along with work with local tribes and ATNI. Sovereignty is the foundation for EWU tribal planning.
The second component of the Tribal Planning curriculum is Strategic Planning, as developed by Dr. Winchell in collaboration with tribes initially in the American Southwest, where he served as tribal planner for the Ft. McDowell Yavapai and developed management training and workshops, and later as Director of the Native American Public Administration Program at Arizona State University, offering an MPA degree based in courses on the Navajo Nation in Window Rock. During that time the New School for Social Research; the Maxwell School of Business, Syracuse University; ASU and the University of New Mexico developed a dynamic strategic planning initiative with the Navajo Nation. Mr. Stan Boynton and Mr. Serre Murray, graduate students from the New School, coordinated development of a sophisticated budget and policy analysis process which was applied with the Navajo Nation and the City of New York from 1978-1980. The process was continued as Strategic Planning and carried out for Navajo Nation chapter government officials and tribal leaders over the next decade (Winchell 1996). Strategic Planning is part of the tribal planning curriculum at EWU using this model, which examines three components: Decision-Making; Management (and budgeting); and Team Building. Workbooks and guides for Strategic Planning, SWOT, and MBOR are regularly updated and used in training and classes in tribal planning.

Tribal Planning at EWU is not simply applying Anglo (non-Indian) planning to tribal lands and government. Instead, it is based on students understanding the unique status and powers of American Indian tribal governments through a knowledge of tribal sovereignty, and the dynamics and complexity of strategic planning—policy analysis, management, and community-building, in addition to providing all basic skills of contemporary urban and community planning. The Tribal Comprehensive Plan is envisioned and presented as including all elements of an Anglo Comprehensive Plan, plus additional elements to address issues and concerns of American Indian peoples (Winchell 1996). The coursework and curricula in tribal planning is offered at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Classes include standard lectures, readings, and
presentations, but incorporate tribal planners and elected tribal officials and staff from nearby tribal governments, and generally include field research.

EWU has established partnerships and long-term relationships with all tribes in the Pacific Northwest, and with the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians. We actively support tribal planning and tribal transportation programs and development, working with ATNI, the National Congress of American Indians (NCAI), and the Intertribal Transportation Association (ITA). We recognize and regularly report to ATNI’s Tribal Transportation Committee and Economic Development Committee, working with 55 recognized tribal governments in the Pacific Northwest. ATNI’s Economic Development Committee helped develop, offer courses, and approve the initial tribal planning emphasis working with EWU. At the request of ATNI, EWU established the Northwest Tribal Technical Assistance Program (TTAP) funded by the DOT and BIA IRR Roads Program in 1993, and the program has been in operation since that time.

**Purpose**

The purpose of the tribal planning curriculum at Eastern Washington University is to develop an educational program for American Indian students within a university so that tribal planning can be carried out by American Indian people with the same or higher levels of recognized professional planning skills as non-Indians in non-tribal settings, and so that all planners throughout the region have a basic understanding of tribal sovereignty and the unique frameworks for tribal planning. EWU is a professionally accredited planning program at both the undergraduate and graduate level, and the tribal planning curriculum at EWU is a specialization within those professional programs.

American Indian students who complete their Bachelor of Arts in Urban and Regional Planning or the Master of Urban and Regional Planning (MURP) are provided a strong education in all aspects of planning, and in addition gain an understanding of tribal planning and its applications for tribal governments. The goal is to support American Indians and all of our students to be able to work in non-tribal planning jobs as well as
tribal employment. For tribal planning, the goal of self-determination for American Indian tribes means that professionally trained tribal members from each tribe are best suited to conduct planning within their tribe. It is a goal of the EWU tribal planning programs to seek to support these efforts through an emphasis in tribal planning, to provide support and technical assistance for tribal members in on-the-job training, education and workshops; and special programs to support those tribal members gain professional degrees that reflect their professional skill levels, knowledge, and performance.

The Tribal Planning Programs also seek to support American Indian Tribes and American Indian Organizations with technical assistance in planning, transportation, community and economic development. Our planning programs regularly carry out contracts and community service-learning projects to support tribal planning efforts on local reservations. We also regularly participate in the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, particularly working with the Transportation Committee, the Economic Development Committee, and the Policy Institute. Strategic planning and program development are strengths of the program, and we have conducted numerous contracts with tribes to establish tribal planning within individual tribal governments. We have also worked with specific ATNI Initiatives, providing models and assistance in the Oregon State Tribal Tourism Programs, and development of tribal programs and education within the Washington State DOT, the national Indigenous People’s Specialty Group of the American Planning Association, and work with the Western Planner and Washington Chapter to develop tribal planning curricula at conferences.

The curriculum also recognizes the need to help non-Indian planners become more aware of and sensitive to the special issues and contexts of tribal planning. We believe this exposure to tribal planning for all students within our curriculum strengthens and supports the efforts of tribal governments in planning within the region.
**Applied Tribal Planning**

Perhaps the strength of the Tribal Planning Specialization at EWU is the applications of planning methods and analysis to tribal settings. The EWU Tribal Planning Model continuously seeks opportunities for applied class research, independent research, student internships with tribes, and the writing of student thesis and research reports on issues which concern or support tribes within the region. We work closely with local tribes and with ATNI in this effort. Often these applied research efforts serve as models for how tribes might carry out tribal planning, and several student projects have been recognized with APA regional and national awards. Our students can receive college credit (up to 10 credits) for internships with tribal governments, and many have successfully worked with tribes during the summer or at the end of their degree programs.

**Tribal Planning Classes/Workshops**

One of the most difficult dilemmas in the tribal planning curriculum is how to serve American Indian students and meet the need for higher education of tribal members. Often, tribal members are already working as planners or in tribal government, and it is difficult for them to get away for the two years of full-time class work required for either the undergraduate and graduate degrees at EWU. We have tried to accommodate this by offering Summer Tribal Planning Workshops, in which students can complete up to 12 college credits, a (full-time quarter,) in essentially one month. So far these classes have been offered either at EWU's Spokane or Cheney campuses, but we are planning to offer classes in other locations, and we have offered classes as far away as Window Rock, Arizona.

Initially most of our tribal planning curriculum was delivered through the Summer Institute on Tribal Planning in which classes were offered in concentrated time frames (9:00 am-5:00 pm daily for 2-5 days per class) to attract planners working for tribes as well as regular students and students from other institutions. This format is in its
Tribal Planning at Eastern Washington University

twentieth year in 2008. The following classes are offered: Tribal Planning, Tribal Census Data Analysis (using GIS), Tribal Transportation Planning (see syllabi attached).

In addition, we now offer at least one specialization class in tribal planning each quarter of the Academic year, and some of those classes are in the evening or on weekends to facilitate instruction by local tribal leaders. The strategic planning workshop (Issue Analysis) is offered as a two-day workshop every year, and can be scheduled on request by tribes at any location. We also conduct applied research for tribes through regular classes, usually Spring and Summer, including Parks Planning, Planning Studio, and Advanced Planning Studio.

Our regular curriculum (classes during each quarter) in Tribal Planning now include: Introduction to Tribal Planning, Tribal Planning Law, Tribal Economic Development, American Indian Architecture, and Independent Study on Advanced Tribal Planning.

Our emphasis in the Tribal Planning curriculum is to provide the training and background necessary for American Indian students to become effective planners and tribal planners through curriculum, applied research and field work, and interaction with tribal planners and tribal leaders at ATNI. We work closely with tribal governments through the Economic Development Committee of the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians for the continued refinement of the curriculum, and are glad to offer assistance to any organization or institution, especially the two-year tribal community colleges, for the development of tribal planning and tribal management courses.

References and Selected Publications.


