

Association of European Schools of Planning (AESOP)



2008 announcement:

Bridging the Gap, Building the Bridge:

The Mediating Role of Planning Theory and Practice

The AESOP-ACSP 2008 conference theme “Bridging the Divide: Celebrating the City” focuses on the mediating role of cities. Many cities are, to some degree, divided or contested. The complex inter-weaving of the multiple experiences, processes and people involved in making up the urban dimension is an established fact: differences (in age, ethnicity, gender, class, religion and culture) are evident in cities on various scales and levels of intensity. And cities themselves may play roles in reproducing identities that promote conflict between groups.

In fact, cities are places where underlying social, economic and political processes can EITHER enhance social divisions and conflict OR create a more equitable, less divided society, through, for example, place-shaping, infrastructure development, governance, fostering or bridging social capital, capacity building, promoting environmental justice, reducing health disparities, and creating mechanisms for conflict resolution. In the perspective of a more equitable society, planning is about designing socio-spatial interventions designed to promote greater social equality. This is the ethical dimension of planning.

Can we reflectively teach students how to think about designing socio-spatial interventions in this ethical way? What are the problems of analysis which need to be addressed?

The 2008 prize for excellence in teaching asks for planning courses that have clearly and consciously integrated elements linking the spatial dimensions of planning with matters of social equity and diversity in a way which seeks to promote social inclusion and cohesion amongst diverse groups.

The 2008 prize is looking for courses which explicitly raise these ethical issues alongside – or as part of – developing students’ technical skills in designing socio-spatial interventions, with the aim of healing social divisions and conflict. All aspects of diversity can be considered. We now ask for planning courses where these socio-spatial elements are integrated, with particular emphasis on the ethical dimension of the planning discipline which we would like to be taught within planning courses.

AIM OF THE PRIZE

Teaching in the broad field of planning is one of the main activities of our member schools. To highlight this AESOP 2002 introduced a new prize in order to recognise and encourage Excellence in Teaching for Practice. Through this award, AESOP would like

to celebrate and disseminate the good practice in teaching to be found in our member schools. The aim of the award is to stimulate the development of planning courses or groups of courses in order to better prepare students for their forthcoming practice and also to further educate practitioners.

The award's purpose is to promote and encourage planning schools to apply new pedagogy, theories and/ or technologies/ techniques in ways that enhance the theories, knowledge and skills necessary for planning. The award will provide an important opportunity to disseminate effective practice and innovation, for it also aims to promote the development of courses for those who have already been in practice for some years. Hopefully it will encourage such persons to return to school to exchange ideas about new theories and methods. Each year the prize will focus on one specific theme, presented on AESOP website.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Planning is seen in a wide perspective. We expect that nominations will be a critical and constructive contribution to teaching. They will inspire and foster curiosity, rigor, creativity, critical thinking, and the building of lifelong learning habits.

Planning courses, or modules, or an integrated series of course or modules, of maximum length of two semesters can be nominated - **BUT NOT A WHOLE PROGRAMME IN ANY ONE YEAR OF THE COURSE OF STUDY.** The nominated course should:

- Define the course perspective of the concept of planning
- Be taught in an innovative pedagogical way;
- Prepare students to be excellent theorists and practitioners.

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

Only AESOP member schools can be nominated for this prize. The course must have been successfully implemented for at least one year. Applicants can either be:

- A planning school;
- A planning department within a university; or
- A group of teaching staff.

Young academics are warmly encouraged to apply.

HOW TO APPLY

Use the electronic application form available from the AESOP web site http://www.aesop-planning.com/Documents/PrT_applForm.doc. All material must be submitted electronically to the chair of the jury, Francesco Lo Piccolo in Italy.

An expression of interest (name of teaching staff, planning school, title of the course and a short (50-100 word) description of its content) must be received by 1st of March 2008. Final nominations must be received by 1st of May 2008. Please send the nomination electronically to <fpiccolo@unipa.it>

Final nominations must include a full description of the course or module, specifying:

- The content of the course;
- The context/ instructional setting (country, educational system, institution, etc);
- The learners (type, members on course, stage in education);
- Justification of why this course/pedagogy/technique is important for planning;
- Learning objectives for the students;

- In what way is the pedagogy innovative;
- The perspective of the concept of ‘planning’ in the actual course;
- Explanation of why the approach is innovative;
- How any difficulties were overcome;
- How the successful elements of the course can be reproduced and applied at other institutions;
- How does the course meet the specific criteria for the prize.
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THE JURY

A panel of six academics and practitioners will judge the nominees. The panel will consist mainly of AESOP members, reinforced with an active practitioner.

According to the annual topic of the prize competition, the panel of judges will establish the criteria for submission and evaluation, according to the following points:

- How is the annual topic of the prize defined and integrated into the teaching?
- In what ways is the pedagogy innovative?
- Why and how is the nominated course/module and/or pedagogy important for planning practice?
- How is theory and practice integrated in the course/module or in the pedagogy?
- How are students prepared for a life of “reflective practice”?
- What difficulties were met in developing the course and/or pedagogy and how were they overcome?
- How can the successful elements of the course be reproduced and applied at other institutions?

AWARDING THE PRIZE

A prize of 1000 EUROS will be presented to a representative of the winning programme during the annual AESOP congress. The winner will be expected to make an audio-visual presentation of the programme at the subsequent year’s congress. He/she/they will also be expected to allow the programme to be presented on AESOP’s website.