

Design Principles of the Urban Landscape

Arch 5711, Spring 2006 Assignments

January 15, 2006

In addition to participating in weekly readings and discussions, students will be required to complete a number of assignments. There are six assignments and the grades from five will count toward the final course grade. **Students can choose to not hand in one assignment but we highly recommend that you do all the assignments and discard one grade.**

Note: You will be graded on how well you respond to the questions below, and on your ability to communicate your points effectively. While there will not be one right answer your comments do need to be well thought out.

“A” papers answer questions in a sophisticated manner with excellent analysis and explanation, good links between text and graphics, though there may be minor mistakes; “B” papers show less clarity of overall argument, underemphasize a major section, or don’t link graphics and text in a coherent way. *Late papers will receive a grade of zero.* More tips on grading are included in the syllabus.

Assignment 1: The historical city today

Due Week 2 on Thursday Jan 26; 20% of grade

- Select an area in Minneapolis or St. Paul that was constructed largely before the 1920s (before automobiles and modern design became popular).
- For next week bring a (printed) photo from Google Earth, a printed plan or map (can be an online map), and two to three (printed) photographs of the area, that show the urban fabric and the social history of the place (who lived and worked there). The maps and photos may be historical or contemporary. They need to be neat but do not need to be graphically sophisticated except to form some kind of coherent set.
- Write, and bring, **500-1000 words** about how you know this is from that period and how it has changed over time. Relate this to at least three of the readings from weeks one and two.
- There will be time in the Thursday in the first week to discuss this assignment--bring questions.

Due: Thursday, Jan 26, Pin up graphic parts of assignments for discussion in relation to readings and class themes. Graphic and written components need to be handed in at the end of class.

Grading: 50% images, 50% text including links to readings; up to 10% deducted for not sticking to the page length or word count.

Assignment 2: Google earth to view center cities and suburbs

Due Week 4 on Thursday, Feb 9, 20% of grade

- You need to choose two major world cities to examine using Google Earth. One city should be from Europe or North America and one from somewhere else. Find interesting cities with high resolution imagery. We will introduce this assignment in class on Feb 2 so bring questions.
- Provide a PowerPoint of three images for each city, taken from a height of 7000 feet approximately—one of a grand civic space, one an affluent residential area, one a poor

residential area. You can send up to two additional Google earth images from each place that are particularly interesting and they can be from a different height. To fit in the PowerPoint you need to reduce / scale the picture to 62%. Steps will be demonstrated in class. Label each PowerPoint using at least 20 pt fonts with:

- Your name
- The place name
- Height above the ground
- A few key word--eg. Grand Civic Space
- Name the PowerPoint with your last name and first initial. PowerPoints need to be emailed to the appropriate TA by **NO LATER THAN 5PM ON FEBRUARY 8**.
- Write, and bring, **500-1000 words** of captions mentioning each of the slides explaining why they are interesting (typical, grand, unusual, disturbing) and what questions they raise in relation to the readings (e.g. do you wonder if this Radburn planning has modernist or nostalgic architecture). You must refer to and engage with at least four of the readings in the first four weeks of class.

Due: Thursday, February 9, discuss PowerPoint show in relation to readings. Captions due at end of class.

Grading: 50% images, 50% text including links to readings; up to 10% deducted for not sticking to the page length or word count and not presenting PowerPoints to class.

Assignment 3: Affordable housing exhibit and Jane Jacobs

Due by the end of the day on February 20, 20% of grade

Visit the affordable housing exhibit at the Weisman. Email 500-1,000 words on how the designs relate to the Jane Jacobs reading. Extra credit for those who use other readings from the class.

Grading: 50% analysis / critique of the exhibition, 50% links to readings; up to 10% deducted for not sticking to the page length or word count.

Assignment 4: Urban designs

Due: April 13 in class, 20% of grade

Propose a typology of major approaches to urban design with examples that draw on the readings from the entire course, with some focus on weeks 5-9. The typology can focus on one dimension e.g. approaches to designing neighborhoods or approaches to ecological issues. Alternatively, the typology may examine the entire breadth of urban design. This is meant to help you think through an approach that you are attracted to. Papers should draw on at least three of the speakers (including those listed under events) and at least two of the course readings. Deal with at least three approaches in some depth. Papers of 500-1,200 words are due in class.

Grading: 50% analysis, 50% links to readings and speakers; up to 10% deducted for not sticking to the page length or word count.

Assignment 5: Critiquing a plan as healthy and sustainable.

Due: Thursday, April 27, 20% of grade

- Select two of the available as PDFs on the class web site. These will be largely shopping and entertainment areas.
- Provide an annotated version of the plan critiquing it in terms of:
 - Active living
 - Sustainable design.
- Write, and bring, 500-1200 words of additional commentary about which values are important--popular entertainment, active living, or sustainable design. Is it possible to have it all? Relate this to at least 2 of the readings from weeks 10-15.

Due: Thursday, April 27: Pin up and discuss.

Grading: 50% annotated plan critique, 50% text including links to readings; up to 10% deducted for not sticking to the page length or word count.

Assignment 6: Future urbanisms movie review

Due: Wednesday, May 10, 20% of grade

View Bladerunner and/or Brazil. Evaluate the films' visions of urban design. Draw particularly on readings from weeks 5-9, citing on at least three of them. The paper should be 500 to 1,200 words.

Due: Wednesday, May 10.

Grading: 50% analysis, 50% links to readings and class in general; up to 10% deducted for not sticking to the page length or word count.