

# Design Principles of the Urban Landscape

## Arch 5711, Spring 2006 Syllabus

Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:45-2  
Room Rapson 56, 3 credits  
January 10 version.

### INSTRUCTORS

Professor: Ann Forsyth, [Forsyth@umn.edu](mailto:Forsyth@umn.edu), Office Hours 4-6 Mondays, 1 Rapson Hall.

Teaching Assistants:

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### COURSE OVERVIEW & STRUCTURE

This lecture course introduces students to urban design tracing the dynamics that created contemporary urban spatial patterns and the planning and design theories that have guided public interventions in the built environment. The course first introduces the basic range of urban design strategies as they have developed historically, then examines what urban designers do, and finally examined a number of recurring issues in urban design from the healthy city to sustainability. The course is divided into two tracks. Tuesday lectures provide the main narrative of the course. With the exception of the first week, Thursday exercises and guest lectures allow students to explore issues in more detail either in a hands-on manner or through interactions with practicing professionals.

### LOGISTICS

Readings are on reserve at the library in Rapson and available for sale at the Campus Book Store. The readings are:

LeGates, Richard & Frederic Stout eds. 2003. *The City Reader*. Third Edition. New York: Routledge.

Hayden, Dolores. 2003. *Building Suburbia*. New York: Pantheon.

Readings need to be completed before the Tuesday class. Readings will be discussed in class.

### TIMETABLE

*The emergence of contemporary environmental design*

#### **Week 1, Jan 17, 19: Urban design in the early industrial period**

- Urban design before the industrial revolution and what is called urban design today
- Rise of industrial city--technologies of urban growth
- Ordering the city
  - Columbian exposition; municipal art, civic improvement, and outdoor art movements; women and the City Beautiful, Plan for Chicago; parks movements in the late 19th and early 20th centuries
- Early suburbanization--fleeing the industrial city
- Theories of the city--how the changes have been explained

*Readings:* Friedrich Engels. 1845. The Great Towns. In *The City Reader*.

Hayden, Dolores. 2003. *Building Suburbia*. Chapter 3: Borderlands.

**Thursday: Lecture continues; Assignment 1 introduced: The historical city today**

#### **Week 2, Jan 24, 26: Garden cities and new towns**

- High style planned suburbs
- Ebenezer Howard and the Garden City movement

- Garden cities; social and regional cities; Regional Planning Association of America and radburnization; new towns world wide
  - Neighborhoods and housing
    - Community, diversity, and exclusion; regulation and neighborhoods
- Readings:* Howard, Ebenezer. 1898. Excerpts from Garden Cities of Tomorrow. In *The City Reader*.

Hayden, Dolores. 2003. *Building Suburbia*. Chapter 4: Picturesque Enclaves.

Sitte, Camillo. 1889. Various selections. In *The City Reader* pp. 414-423.

**Thursday: Assignment 1 Due:** 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. **Break out room TBA.**

**Event: Jan 23, 5:45 Ken Reardon, 100 Rapson Hall**

### **Week 3, Jan 31, Feb 2: Transportation and urbanism**

- Transportation underpinnings of urbanization: rail, street car, car, and plane
- Transportation and urban/built form
  - Streets and blocks, metropolitan form
- The design of transportation infrastructure
  - Streets and sidewalks, parkways and freeways, transit hubs
- Decline of active transportation and street vitality

*Readings:* Hayden, Dolores. 2003. *Building Suburbia*. Chapter 5: Streetcar Buildouts.

Wright, Frank Lloyd. 1935. Broadacre City: A New Community Plan. In *The City Reader*.

Jackson, Kenneth. The Drive-In Culture of Contemporary America. In *The City Reader*.

**Thursday: Introduce Assignment 2: Google earth to view center cities and suburbs.**

### *Post war urban design*

### **Week 4, Feb 7, 9: Mass production suburbia**

- Large scale suburbanization
  - Reasons for mass production--demand, technology, building industry, regulation
  - Roles of planners and designers
- Kinds of new suburban environments
- Impact on the central city
- Cultural critiques of suburban ugliness and urban sprawl
  - Proposals for alternatives

*Readings:* Hayden, Dolores. 2003. *Building Suburbia*. Chapter 7: Sitcom Suburbs.

**Thursday: Assignment 2 Due: PowerPoint show for discussion in relation to readings.**

**Captions due at end of class. Break out room TBA.**

### **Week 5, Feb 14, 16: Modernism and its reactions**

- Renewing the central city
  - Slum clearance; early and later modern urbanisms
- Reactions to modernism
  - Jane Jacobs, imageability, townscape, contextualism
- Changing economic base of the central city

*Readings:* Le Corbusier. 1969. A Contemporary City. In *The City Reader*.

Jacobs, Jane. 1961. The Uses of Sidewalks: Safety. In *The City Reader*

Lynch, Kevin. 1960. The City Image and its Elements. In *The City Reader*.

**Thursday: Assignment 3: Affordable Housing Exhibit Critique. Go instead of class.**

**Assignment due February 20.**

### **Week 6, Feb 21, 23: How the world changed since the 1970s**

- Large-scale changes
  - Technological changes, globalization of economy, privatization, environmental change, social/demographic change, political conflict
- Strategies for urban design--back offices, unique milieux
- Why everyone does not win

*Readings:* Weber, Mel. 1968. The Post-City Age. In *The City Reader*.

Sassen, Saskia. The impact of the new technologies and globalization on cities In *The City Reader*.

Hayden, Dolores. 2003. *Building Suburbia*. Chapter 8: Edge Nodes.

**Guest: Tim Griffin on St. Paul redevelopment**

**Event: Feb 20, 5:45 Alex Krieger, 100 Rapson Hall**

### *Who does urban design?*

#### **Week 7, Feb 28, March 2: Who actually builds cities?**

- Key players in the urban environment
  - Clients and consumers
  - Development professionals--developers, builders, bankers, marketers
    - Development specialties; demand; the case of nonprofits
  - Regulators--planners, governments
  - Designers--engineers, architects, landscape architects
- The overall logic of money / investment and the business of development
  - Use value, exchange value and urban design

*Readings:* Downs, Anthony. 1989. The Need for a new vision.... In *The City Reader*.

**Guest: Peter Brown on public and private sectors; designers, planners, developers**

#### **Week 8, March 7, 9: What do urban designers do?**

- Practical work
  - Clients and publics; key issues; scales of work; methods of analysis and representation; implementation strategies
- Glib goals, BIG moves, and comprehensive plans vs. detailed design
- How architects, landscape practice urban design
- Urban design in suburbia

*Readings:* Jacobs, Alan and Donald Appleyard. 1987. Toward an Urban Design Manifesto. In *The City Reader*.

Arnstein, Sherry. 1969. A Ladder of Citizen Participation. In *The City Reader*.

**Guest: Nick Koch on urban design in practice**

#### **Week 9, March 21, 23: What systems do urban designers need to understand?**

- Systems in the metropolis
  - Public spaces: plazas, parks, streets v.s. institutions
  - Physical systems: water infrastructure, air
  - Economic systems: commerce, recap on transportation, development
  - Regulation: local, regional, state, and national
- How apparently boring systems shape the form and experience of the city

*Readings:* Calthorpe, Peter and William Fulton. 2001. Designing the region.... In *The City Reader*.

**Guest: Tim Griffin on systems.**

**Event: March 20, 5:45 Margaret Crawford, 100 Rapson Hall**

### *Recurring issues in urban design*

#### **Week 10, March 28, 30: Sustainable cities**

- Changing meanings of environment
- Approaches to the environment: land ethic and ecological design, economic approaches, sustainability
- Social equity, culture, and sustainability
- Aesthetics, meaning, and sense of place

*Readings:* Wheeler, Stephen. 1998. Planning Sustainable and Livable Cities. In *The City Reader*.

Beatley, Timothy. 2000. Green urbanism.... In *The City Reader*.

**Thursday: Debate on sustainability. Break out room TBA.**

**Event: Great Conversation on Housing, with Nic Retsinas**

#### **Week 11, April 4, 6: Neighborhoods**

- The neighborhood tradition
  - Small towns, neighborhood units, Lynchian districts, Alexander's patterns

- Do we need neighborhoods?
- Do neighborhoods need boundaries?
- Do neighborhoods form communities?
  - Diversity vs. exclusion

*Readings:* Duany, Andres and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk. 1993. The Neighborhood, the District, and the Corridor. In *The City Reader*.

Putnam, Robert. 1995. Bowling Alone. In *The City Reader*.

**Guest: Gretchen Nicholls, working with neighborhoods**

**Event: April 3, 5:45, Anne Vernez Moudon, 100 Rapson Hall**

### **Week 12, April 11, 13: Active and healthy cities**

- Urban form and public health
- Physical activity and obesity
- Differences between adults and youth
- Do walkable environments lead to walking?

*Readings:* all from: [http://www.plannersnetwork.org/publications/mag\\_2003\\_4\\_fall.html](http://www.plannersnetwork.org/publications/mag_2003_4_fall.html)

Day, Kristen. Urban Planning For Active Living: Who Benefits?

Forsyth, Ann. 7<sup>th</sup> Generation, The Environment's Role in Physical Activity: Necessary but Not Sufficient

Fenton, Mark. Engineering Physical Activity Back Into Americans' Lives

**Thursday: Assignment 4 due for discussion: Urban designs. Break out room TBA.**

**Introduce assignment 5: Critiquing a plan as healthy and sustainable**

### **Week 13, April 18, 20: Consumption**

Guest April 18: Peter Brown on shopping

*Readings:* Zukin, Sharon. 1995. Whose Culture? Whose City? In *The City Reader*.

**Thursday:**

- Shopping
- Tourism
- Entertainment

### **Week 14, April 25, 27: Diversity**

- Inequality and diversity--what's the difference?
- Diversity and democracy--paradoxes of participation
- Aesthetics, culture, and diversity
- The spaces of diversity and inequality--locally and globally

*Readings:* Hayden, Dolores. 2003. *Building Suburbia*. Chapter 11: The Importance of Older Suburbs.

DuBois, WEB. 1899. Excerpts from *The Philadelphia Negro*. In *The City Reader*.

**Thursday: Pin up and discussion of Assignment 5. Break out room TBA.**

### **Week 15, May 2, 4: Futures**

- Histories or technologies--is the future nostalgia or the avante garde?
  - High tech buildings/sites v.s high tech urbanism
  - Technological supports for nostalgia and anti-urbanism

*Readings:* Hayden, Dolores. 2003. *Building Suburbia*. Chapter 9: Rural Fringes and Chapter 10: Nostalgia and Futurism,

**Thursday replacement: Assignment 6: Blade Runner and Brazil—movie review.**

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

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.

Assignments are described in a separate handout.

### **Class participation**

Each week we will call on class members to discuss the readings. You are responsible for preparing comments on the readings even if you have not written about that week's readings as part of the assignment. This component is not graded; however, if you are on the margin between two grades we will take participation, positively, or negatively, into account.

### **Grading**

Course grades will be assigned based on percentage (90% and above = A range, 80% and above = B range, etc.), followed by subjective analysis of dramatic improvement over the semester, class participation, and the like. Assignment grades are explained on the assignments sheet and grading tips are below.

Please review the University Senate Uniform Grading and Transcript Policy, if you are unsure about the standards associated with each letter grade:

[www1.umn.edu/usenate/policies/gradingpolicy.html](http://www1.umn.edu/usenate/policies/gradingpolicy.html)

### **TIPS ON ASSESSMENT**

You will do best in the exercises if you do the following.

1. Read the syllabus and exercise instructions and do all sections of the question(s). Missing whole sections of the assignment is a MAJOR reason for lower grades.
2. Answer the questions that are asked. If the question asks about the historical city, that is what you should discuss and not some other issue like its contemporary form. However, if you think that the benefits issue is important for practicality, for example, you need to make that link quite explicit.
3. Be concerned about content and not form. For example, an answer that says that "Howard describes the garden city in detail in terms of a number of social and economic factors" (17 words) will not do as well as one that says "Howard describes the garden city as self contained and surrounded by a belt of open space" (16 words); or "Howard's garden city of 30,000 had municipally owned land and was centered on a park" (15 words).
4. If the question asks you to give an opinion (is something better, more practical etc), make it clear what you think. This can be that you think there are arguments for both sides, but be explicit.
5. It is good to use examples but make sure you describe them accurately and make their relevance explicit and clear. While we will give you as much benefit of the doubt as possible there are some statements that are clearly not correct.
6. Finally, the Harvard Bok Center has a useful on-line handout on grading  
[http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~bok\\_cen/docs/GradingPapers.html](http://www.fas.harvard.edu/~bok_cen/docs/GradingPapers.html)

### **A SERIOUS NOTE ON PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism and cheating, on any course assignment, will not be tolerated. Offenders will receive a grade of F for the class. You may not submit work previously submitted for another class to complete any part of this class. All coursework submitted must represent your own, original work. References to the work of others (including images) must be properly cited. **If you do not understand what constitutes plagiarism, please see the instructor immediately!**

### **ADDITIONAL READING—to be supplied**