

EVDS 501/601, ARST 483 Interdisciplinary Seminar

Fall 2014 (Half course)

Wednesdays

18:00-20:50

Room PF 2160

Breakout Rooms: PF 3177, PF 2110, PF 2140, PF 3176, PF 4140

Managers:

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TAs:

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INTRODUCTION

Environmental design is an interdisciplinary approach to the analysis, conceptualization, design and execution of interventions in human and natural environments at a variety of scales – from object to the globe. These interventions affect policy, process, practice, and physical space. Thinking first of Calgary, and then beyond Calgary, this course will introduce students to key concepts and ways of thinking for an interdisciplinary environmental design. The course will focus attention on the underlying processes by which social and ecological systems are shaped and evolve, both naturally and through design.

Objectives

1. Students will be able to critically discuss and articulate a range of theoretical perspectives on key concepts of environmental design.
2. Students will be able to articulate their own understanding of key concepts in environmental design, and position their understandings in relation to prominent positions and debates within the field, and practices within their current and future professions.
3. Students will develop analytic skills and be able to examine design interventions and articulate the nature of the intervention, key elements of the intervention, and its critical design issues.
4. Students will improve their critical, creative and professional communications skills, including written, oral and visual communication.

Teaching Approach

This course will introduce students to a range of theoretical and professional perspectives on environmental design represented within the Faculty, the wider university community, and among professional and community practitioners. This material will be introduced, discussed and debated through lectures, videos, readings, small group discussion, field exposures and hands-on exercises. Typically, a lecture will be followed by small group discussions on the lecture and the week's assigned readings, led by the course managers and TAs. A variety of assignments will help students develop their own thinking and approach to environmental design. The course will be structured in two parts: a focus on the City of Calgary, and then extending the questions of environmental design beyond Calgary to regional and global spaces. The course will introduce students to examples and case studies of research and design interventions at a variety of scales.

Course Expectations and Means of Evaluation

Students will be expected to attend all lectures and discussion sessions. Students will also be expected to read assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss the issues and concepts raised in the readings. Discussions will be respectful of all opinions. All papers are to be properly referenced using the *The Chicago Manual of Style* format (see www.chicagomanualofstyle.org). If you are unsure about citations, please refer to Plagiarism section at the end of this syllabus. Students who have difficulties with writing are referred to the University of Calgary's Writing Centre (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>).

Students must complete each of the course assignments in order to pass this course. There will be no final exam. Quality of writing (spelling, grammar, clarity) or other forms of communication will be a component of the assessment of all assignments. The grade breakdown and assignments are as follows:

1. Participation 20%

This includes participation in lectures and discussion groups, the discussion group book club, as well as the peer review process for the term paper.

2. Urban Analysis 15%

The group project involves using different approaches to understanding urban space, and reflecting on their strengths and weaknesses for analyzing and solving environmental design problems. Three sites will be chosen by the instructors, with four groups going to each site; each site will be analyzed using four different approaches (e.g., transect & section; ethnography and sound; observation and video; other). Each group's findings will be presented to the entire class in a poster format.
Deadline: Oct. 22

3. Term Essay (3000 words) 35%

Following academic standards for a term paper (critical, well researched, referenced), write a 3000-4000 word essay that critically examines one of the posed questions or topics. Refer to handout for further details. This paper will be drafted, peer reviewed, and then a final version handed in for grading.

First Draft Deadline: November 24. Peer Review Day: Nov. 26. Final Draft Deadline: Dec. 5.

4. Pecha Kucha Presentation 15%

Working in teams of 3 students, you are to develop a "Pecha Kucha" presentation (see www.pecha-kucha.org) in one of the thematic areas delineated in the final . Select a topic and develop a critical take on it. The presentation involves 20 slides (images and/or text) and a verbal presentation. Each image is shown for 20 seconds, for a total presentation of 6 minutes, 40 seconds. Each session will involve 6-8 presentations. Presentations will be graded on content, clarity, continuity, and visual communications. Refer to handout for further details.

Deadline: November 12 or 19, depending on group.

5. Reading Responses 15%

During the semester students are required to write at least three short critical summaries of a week's required readings. These should be about one page, or 500 words long. Responses could include 1-2 sentences describing the content of the reading, 1-2 sentences describing the key arguments, and a few sentences describing why the content is important to environmental design, and how it changes your thinking about the question, "what is environmental design"? These are to be handed in to the discussion group leaders at the beginning of the discussion groups.

Deadline: First one is due September 17 (in relation to the readings assigned for that day), then students may choose which two days of course readings to write about in summaries. Students will not write about book club readings in these responses.

LECTURE AND DISCUSSION SCHEDULE

Note:

Class meetings are typically divided into a lecture portion (6-7:30 pm) and a discussion group portion (7:30 -9 pm)

Week 1, September 10

Lecture: Introduction to the Course

Discussion Groups: Introductions; tours; book club choice

Reading:

- Orr, David. "Human Ecology as a Problem of Ecological Design." In *The Nature of Design*, Oxford University Press, 2002, ISBN: 0-19-514855-X (238 pages), 13-32.

Week 2, September 17

Lecture: City and Region of Calgary (Bev and Mary-Ellen)

Discussion Groups: discuss guest lecture and readings

Readings:

- Ian McHarg, "The Place of Nature in the City of Man," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 352:1 (March 1964), 1-12
- Douglas Kelbaugh, "Critical Regionalism: An Architecture of Place," in Michael Larice and Elizabeth Macdonald, eds. *The Urban Design Reader* (London: Routledge, 2007), 183-193

Week 3, September 24

Lecture: Design Matters Speaker Series with Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris

Discussion Groups: discuss guest lecture and readings

Readings:

- Ali Madanipour, "Social Exclusion and Space", 181-88 in *The City Reader*
- Ken Greenberg, "Public Space, Lost and Found," in Mark Kingwell and "Patrick Turmel, eds. *Rites of Way: The Politics and Poetics of Public Space* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier Univ Press, 2009), 29-45

Week 4, October 1

Lecture: Rollin Stanley – Calgary's Design Challenges

Discussion Groups: Book Club

Week 5, October 8

Lecture: Noel on Sustainability and Ecologies (Human, Political, Urban, Natural)

Discussion Groups: discuss lecture and readings

Readings

- Worster, Donald, "Chapter 16," in *Nature's Economy: A History of Ecological Ideas*. Cambridge University Press, 1994, ISBN: 0-521-46834-5 (505 pages), 316-338.
- Commoner, Barry, "Chapter 2: The Ecosphere," in *The Closing Circle: Man, Nature and Technology*, Bantam Books, 1974 (343 pages), 11-44.
- Capra, Fritjof, "Chapter 3: Social Reality," *The Hidden Connections: Integrating the Biological, Cognitive and Social Dimensions of Life into A Science of Sustainability*, Doubleday, 2002, ISBN: 0-385-49471-8 (300 pages), 70-94.

BLOCK WEEK—NO CLASSES on October 15 (Design Matters lecture with Mary McLeod)

Week 6, October 22

Lecture: TBD

Discussion Groups: Poster Session for Urban Analysis Assignment

Week 7, October 29

Lecture: Graham and Mark on Design

Discussion Groups: discuss guest lecture and readings/ Book Club

Readings

- Latour, Bruno. 2008. "A Cautious Prometheus? A Few Steps Toward a Philosophy of Design." Keynote Lecture for the Networks of Design meeting of the Design History Society Falmouth, Cornwall, 3rd September 2008.
- TBD

Week 8, November 5

Lecture: Guest on Political Ecologies
Discussion Groups: Pecha Kucha Warmup

Week 9, November 12

Lecture: Design Matter Speaker Series with Bryce Miranda
Discussion Groups: Pecha Kuchas

Week 10, November 19

Lecture: Guest Lecture on Regional Land Use Management
Discussion Groups: Pecha Kuchas

Week 11, November 26

Lecture: Guest Lecture by Janet Keeping on Ethics of Sustainability
Discussion Groups: Peer Review Session

Readings:

- Russ, T.H., "Professional Ethics," in *Sustainability and Design Ethics*, Taylor and Francis, 2010, ISBN 978-1-4398-0854-2 (156 pages), 19-45.
- Eckersley, Robyn, "Chapter 18: Environment Rights and Democracy," in Keil, Bell, Penz and Fawcett, *Political Ecology: Global and Local*, Routledge, 1998, ISBN: 0-415-18381-2 (408 pages), 253-376.

Week 12, December 3:

Lecture (not): Last Book Club Discussion
Discussion Groups: Book Club Reporting and Class-wide Discussion

NOTES

1. Written work, term assignments and other course related work may only be submitted by e-mail if prior permission to do so has been obtained from the course instructor.
2. It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations. If you are a student with a documented disability who may require academic accommodation and have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre, please contact their office at 220-8237. (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/drc/node/46>) Students who have not registered with the Disability Resource Centre are not eligible for formal academic accommodation. You are also required to discuss your needs with your instructor no later than fourteen (14) days after the start of this course.
3. Plagiarism - Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:(a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),(b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,(c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,(d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course(although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved. While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. It is recognized that clause (d) does not prevent a graduate student incorporating work previously done by him or her in a thesis. Any suspicion of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean, and dealt with as per the regulations in the University of Calgary Graduate Calendar.
4. Information regarding the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>) and how this impacts the receipt and delivery of course material
5. Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>)
6. Safewalk information (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>)
7. Contact Info for: Student Union (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/page/affordability-accessibility/su-structure/contact-info>); Graduate Student representative(<http://www.ucalgary.ca/gsa/>) and Student Ombudsman's Office (<http://www.su.ucalgary.ca/page/quality-education/academic-services/student-rights>).
8. At the discretion of the instructor, assignments submitted after the deadline **may** be penalized with the loss of a grade (e.g.: A- to B+) for each day late. The following equivalencies (the University of Calgary has no official percentage scale system) will be used in calculating grades: **A+** (92.5-100); **A** (85-92.49); **A-** (80-84.99); **B+** (76-79.99); **B** (73-75.99); **B-** (70-72.99); **C+** (66-69.99); **C** (63-65.99); **C-** (60-62.99); **D+** (56-59.99); **D** (50-55.99); **F** (0-49.99).
9. A student who receives a "C+" or lower in any one course will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average (GPA) unless the program recommends otherwise. If the program permits the student to retake a failed course, the second grade will replace the initial grade in the calculation of the GPA, and both grades will appear on the transcript. Final grades will be reported as letter grades, with the final grade calculated according to a 4-point range. Assignments will be evaluated by percentage grades with their letter grade equivalents as shown.