

Urban Design Theory

EVDS 671 H (3-0)

Winter 2014

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Office PF 3102 or **Urban Lab** PF 3201 Office Hours by appointment

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Introduction

This course is intended to provide students with an introduction to theories, concepts, methods, and contemporary issues in urban design. The course consists of lectures, seminars, and a short project.

What is Urban Design? In 1956, at what is acknowledged to have been the first Urban Design Conference, held at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, Jose Luis Sert articulated a concern for the development of a common ground within the professions that requires them to play unheroic roles. He advocated bringing together the professions involved in the development of the city, in order to get a total picture of the physical environment by the integration of their efforts. Although subsequent conferences were not able to arrive at a conclusive definition of urban design and its sphere of operation, urban design has persisted as an area of concern. There are still relatively few formal programs of urban design (for example, EVDS offered one of only two degree programs in urban design in Canada from 2002-2007), and although the definition of “urban designer” is not determined by any particular professional organization, urban design is still of great importance.

In this course, urban design is considered to be an approach as well as a methodology for city-building. Urban design deals with three-dimensional design of the built urban environment at the scale of the street, neighbourhood, and city, providing integration between landscape and buildings, and with the processes and strategies of development. Urban design is at the intersection of several disciplines. By focusing on the public nature of all urban development, and by bridging the traditional jurisdictions of many professions, urban design has the potential scope to address the wholeness of the city. Issues of local and regional identity and sustainability also inform the course.

Objectives

1. To develop the skills, techniques & vocabulary to describe, analyse and understand urban form and its evolution
2. To critically review theories, methods and concepts in urban design
3. To understand contemporary issues affecting urban development, urban quality and urban life
4. To be able to articulate a personal approach to urban design from the point of view of designer, facilitator, administrator, and/or user

Content

The course will consist of lectures, case studies, seminars and a short project:

1. Several seminal **lectures and case studies** will cover the following inter-related topics:

Why Urban Design?

- overview of the evolution of urban form, and the planning and design ideas influencing urban development
- urban design as an approach / a way of thinking / a state of mind
- who is involved in the design and development of the urban landscape?

Urban process and form

- a landscape approach to urbanism
- urban morphology
- urban typology – the elements of urban form

Making better places

- the qualities of good urban form
- the public realm and its evolution in the contemporary city and town
- local and regional identity and sense of place

Case studies: Calgary, small town and neighbourhood examples

- evolution of city form and process
- land, landscape and townscape
- contemporary urban design issues and examples

2. **Seminars** on selected urban design theories and theorists will build on the framework of the lectures. Students (working in pairs) will select one reference from a circulated list to review and present to the class in a seminar format. Through these seminars, the class will review several key concepts, theories and issues of urban design. Students will also be required to critique several of the seminar presentations of their peers and synthesize the presentation topics.

3. Project

Students (working in pairs) will critically analyze and explain one of the qualities of ‘good’ urban form, as discussed in the class, and prepare a short (90 second) video on this topic. The video should include a definition of the quality, and explain its importance in creating good urban form. Conditions that support the quality and also those that detract from it should be explained and illustrated. The emphasis should be on visual evidence, however references should also be included. There will be professional instruction on the development of content and preparing the presentation for this part of the course. The videos will be filmed by members of the teaching team, and edited into a class project for subsequent posting in various media.

Evaluation

Evaluation will be based on the assignments, completed during the term.

Seminar	40%
Seminar critique	10%
Project	
outline and storyboard of video	15%
completion of video	35%
Total	100%

Notes:

A passing grade (B-) is each section (seminar, critique, project) is required in order to pass the course as a whole. Work completed as a group or pair will receive a common grade, unless it is clear to the instructor that the balance of the work has been unfairly distributed between team members. All assignments will be evaluated by letter grades. Final course grades will be reported as letter grades, with the final grade calculated according to the 4-point range.

Letter Grade	4-Point Scale	4-Point Range	Description
A+	4.00	4.00	Outstanding - evaluated by instructor
A	4.00	3.85-4.00	Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	3.50-3.84	Very good performance
B+	3.30	3.15-3.49	Good performance
B	3.00	2.85-3.14	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	2.50-2.84	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	2.15-2.49	All final grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements.
C	2.00	1.85-2.14	
C-	1.70	1.50-1.84	
D+	1.30	1.15-1.49	
D	1.00	0.50-1.14	
F	0.00	0-0.49	

Note: 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.

Special Budgetary Considerations

Site visits will be possible on foot or by LRT/bus. Some costs for printing should be anticipated.

Readings

Specific readings may be assigned. Students are encouraged to read widely from the general reference list below. It is expected that students will have a general understanding of the history of cities. Students without this background are strongly advised to read either Morris, AEJ (1979) *History of Urban Form* or Mumford, L (1961) *The City in History* prior to or early in the term. Students are encouraged to acquire one of the urban design readers.

URBAN DESIGN REFERENCES Short List

urban design / city readers, compendia and standards (older editions are also fine):

- American Planning Association (2006) *Planning and Urban Design Standards* (Wiley Graphic Standards)
Carmona, Matthew and Steve Tiesdell (2007) *Urban Design Reader*, Architectural Press
English Partnerships (several printings) *The Urban Design Compendium*. You can order this (it is FREE) on line from <http://www.englishpartnerships.co.uk/PublicationsOrderForm.aspx>
Grant, Jill (2007) *Reader in Canadian Planning: Linking Theory and Practice*, Thompson Nelson Canada, Scarborough
Jencks, Charles and Karl Kropf (eds.) (1997) *Theories/Manifestoes of Contemporary Architecture* Academy Editions
Larice, Michael and Elizabeth Macdonald (2007) *The Urban Design Reader*, Routledge
LeGates, Richard T. and Frederic Stout (1996) *The City Reader*, Routledge

recommended texts

- Alexander, Christopher et al (1977) *A Pattern Language* (Oxford University Press)
Bacon, Edmund N. (1974) *Design of Cities* (New York: Penguin Books)
Bentley, Ian. et al (1985) *Responsive Environments: A Manual for Designers* (Architectural Press)
Calthorpe, Peter (1993) *The Next American Metropolis* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press)
Ellin, Nan (1996) *Postmodern Urbanism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers)
Gehl, Jan (1987) *Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space*
Hough, Michael (1990) *Out of Place: Restoring Identity to the Regional Landscape* (Yale University Press)
Hough, Michael (1994) *Cities and Natural Process* (Routledge)
Jacobs, Jane (1961) *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House)
Jacobs, Alan B., Elizabeth MacDonald and Yodan Rofe (2002) *The Boulevard Book* (MIT Press)
Lynch, Kevin (1971) *Site Planning* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press) or later versions with Garry Hack
Lynch, Kevin (1981) *(A Theory of) Good City Form* (Cambridge Mass.: MIT Press)
McHarg, Ian (1969, reprinted 1994) *Design With Nature* (New York: Doubleday)
Newton, Norman (1971) *Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture* (Harvard University Press)
Relph, Edward (1987) *The Modern Urban Landscape* (London: Croom Helm)
Sandalack, Beverly A & Andrei Nicolai (2006) *The Calgary Project: urban form/urban life* (University of Calgary Press)
Trancik, Roger (1986) *Finding Lost Space: Theories of Urban Design* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold)

URBAN DESIGN REFERENCES Long List

History of Settlements and Urban Form

- Bacon, Edmund N. (1974) *Design of Cities* (New York: Penguin Books)
Benevolo, L. (1967) *The Origins of Modern Town Planning* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press)
Davis, Howard (2000) *The Culture of Building* (Oxford University Press)
Kalman, Harold (ed.) (1994) *A History of Canadian Architecture* (Oxford University Press)
Kostoff, Spiro (1992) *The City Assembled: the Elements of Urban Form Through History*
Kostoff, S. (1991) *The City Shaped: Urban Patterns/Meanings Through History* (Boston: Little Brown)
Morris, A.E.J. (1979) *History of Urban Form* (New York: John Wiley and Sons)
Mumford, Lewis (1961) *The City in History* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich)
Rees, R. (1988) *New & Naked Land - Making the Prairies Home* (Saskatoon: West. Prod. Prairie Books)
Reps, John (1965) *The Making of Urban America: A History of Urban Planning in the US* (Princeton U. Press)
Reps, John (1979) *Cities of the Way West: A History of the Frontier of Urban Planning* (Princeton)

Roberts, Brian K. (1996) *Landscapes of Settlement* (London: Routledge)
Slater, Terry R. (ed.) (1990) *The Built Form of Western Cities* (London: Leicester Univ. Press)
Vance, James E. Jr. (1990) *The Continuing City: Urban Morphology in Western Civilisation* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press)

Urban Form and Process/Urban Design

Alexander, Christopher et al (1977) *A Pattern Language* (Oxford University Press)
Alexander, Christopher et al (1987) *A New Theory of Urban Design* (Oxford University Press)
Arendt, Randall et al (1994) *Rural by Design: Maintaining Small Town Character* (Washington, DC: APA)
Bentley, Ian et al (1985) *Responsive Environments: A Manual for Designers* (London: Arch. Press)
Blumenfeld, Hans (1967) Paul Spreiregen (ed) *Metropolis and Beyond: Selected Essays by Hans Blumenfeld* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press)
Boyer, M. Christine (1998) *The City of Collective Memory: Its Historical Imagery and Architectural Entertainments* (Cambridge: MIT Press)
CABE (Commission on Architecture and the Built Environment) publications in the UK – www.cabe.org.uk/
Calvino, Italo (1972) *Invisible Cities* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Co.)
Charette, Catherine (ed) (1995) *Issues in Canadian Urban Design* (Winnipeg: Institute for Urban Studies)
Clay, Grady (1973) *Close-Up: How to Read the American City* (University of Chicago Press)
Condon, Patrick M. (ed.) (1996) *Sustainable Urban Landscapes: the Surrey Design Charrette* (UBC)
Cullen, Gordon (1961, reprinted 1971) *(The Concise) Townscape* (London: Architectural Press)
Duany, Andres and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk (1991) *Towns and Town-Making Principles* (Rizzoli)
Duany, A, E Plater-Zyberk, and R Alminana (2003) *The New Civic Art: Elements of Town Planning* (Rizzoli)
Ellin, Nan (1996) *Postmodern Urbanism* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers)
Fowler, Edmund D. (1992) *Building Cities That Work* (McGill – Queen's)
Gerecke, Kent (ed.) (1992) *The Canadian City* (Montreal: Black Rose Books)
Gehl, Jan (1987) *Life Between Buildings: Using Public Space* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold)
Harvey, David (1989) *The Urban Experience* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University)
Hayward, Richard and Sue McGlynn (eds) (1993) *Making Better Places: Urban Design Now* (Joint Centre for Urban Design: Butterworths)
Holdsworth, Deryck (ed) (1985) *Reviving Main Street* (University of Toronto Press)
Hough, Michael (1990) *Out of Place: Restoring Identity to the Regional Landscape* (Yale University Press)
Howard, Ebenezer (reprinted 1965) *Garden Cities of Tomorrow* (London: Faber)
Jacobs, Jane (1961) *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Random House)
Jacobs, Alan B. (1993) *Great Streets* (MIT Press)
Jacobs, Alan B., Elizabeth MacDonald and Yodan Rofe (2002) *The Boulevard Book* (MIT Press)
Keith, M. and S. Pile (eds.) (1993) *Place and the Politics of Identity* (London: Routledge)
Katz, Peter (1994) *The New Urbanism: Toward an Architecture of Community* (McGraw Hill)
Krier, Rob (1979) *Urban Space* (New York: Rizzoli)
Krier, Leon (1984) *Houses, Palaces, Cities* D. Porphyrios (ed.) (Arch. Design Profile, Berlin: Belvedere)
LeGates, R.T. and F. Stout (eds.) (1996) *The City Reader* (Routledge)
Lynch, Kevin (1960) *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press)
Lynch, Kevin (1981) *A Theory of Good City Form* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press)
Madanipour, Ali (1996) *Design of Urban Space: An Inquiry into Socio-Spatial Process* (NY: Wiley)
Rapoport, Amos (1977, reprinted 1980) *Human Aspects of Form* (Toronto: Pergamon Press)
Relph, Edward (1976) *Place and Placelessness* (London: Pion Ltd.)
Relph, Edward (1981) *Rational Landscapes & Humanistic Geography* (London: Croom Helm)
Relph, Edward (1987) *The Modern Urban Landscape* (London: Croom Helm)
Rossi, Aldo (1982) *The Architecture of the City* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press)
Sandalack, BA and A Nicolai (2006) *The Calgary Project: urban form/urban life* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press)
Sandalack, BA and A Nicolai (1998) *Urban Structure – Halifax: An Urban Design Approach* (Halifax: Tuns Press)
Sennett, Richard (1990) *The Conscience of the Eye: The Design & Social Life of Cities* (NY: Norton)
Sitte, Camillo (1889, reprinted 1965) *City Building According to Artistic Principles* (New York: Random House)
Trancik, Roger (1986) *Finding Lost Space: Theories of Urban Design* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold)
Tugnutt, Anthony and Mark Robertson (1987) *Making Townscape: a Contextual Approach to Building in an Urban Setting* (London: Mitchell Publishing Co. Ltd.)
Unwin, Raymond (1909) *Town Planning in Practice: an Introduction to the Art of Designing Cities and Suburbs* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press)
Vidler, A, and L. Krier (eds.) (1978) *Rational Architecture* (Brussels: Archives of Modern Architecture)
Whitehand, J.W.R. and P.J. Larkham, eds. (1992) *Urban Landscapes: International Perspectives* (London and New York: Routledge)
Whyte, William H. (1980) *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* (Washington DC: Conservation Foundation)

Landscape Architecture/Natural Form & Process/Cultural Landscape

- Appleton, J. (1975) *The Experience of Landscape* (London: John Wiley)
- Corner, James (1999) *Recovering Landscape: Essays in Contemporary Landscape Architecture*, Princeton Arch Press
- Cranz, Galen (1982) *The Politics of Park Design: A History of Urban Parks in America* (Cambridge: MIT Press)
- Evernden, Neil (1986) *The Natural Alien* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press)
- Fairbrother, Nan (1970) *New Lives, New Landscapes* (New York: A. Knopf)
- Friesen, Gerald (1984) *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (University of Toronto Press)
- Hoskins, W.G. (1955) *The Making of the English Landscape* (London: Penguin Books)
- Hough, Michael (1984) *City Form and Natural Process* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold)
- Hough, Michael (1994) *Cities and Natural Process* (Routledge)
- Jackson, J.B. (1970) *Landscapes: Selected Writings of J. B. Jackson*, ed. E.H. Zube (Amherst: U Mass. Press)
- Jackson, J.B. (1984) *Discovering the Vernacular Landscape* (New Haven: Yale University Press)
- Laurie, Michael (1975) *An Introduction to Landscape Architecture* (New York: Elsevier)
- Leopold, Aldo (1949) *A Sand County Almanac* (Oxford University Press)
- Lowenthal, D. & E.C. Penning-Rowsell (eds.) (1986) *Landscape Meanings & Values* (London: Allen & Unwin)
- Lowenthal, D. (ed.) (1976) *Geographies of the Mind: essays in historical geosophy in honour of John Kirkland Wright* (New York: Oxford University Press)
- Lynch, Kevin (1976) *Managing the Sense of a Region* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press)
- Lynch, Kevin (1971) *Site Planning* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press) or later versions with Garry Hack
- McHarg, Ian (1969, 1994 reprint) *Design With Nature* (New York: Doubleday)
- Meinig, D.W. (ed.) *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays* (Oxford University Press)
- Newton, Norman (1971) *Design on the Land: The Development of Landscape Architecture* (Harvard University Press)
- Rees, R. (1988) *New & Naked Land - Making the Prairies Home* (Saskatoon: West. Prod. Prairie Books)
- Sandalack, BA and A Davis (2005) *Excursions into the Cultural Landscapes of Alberta* (Calgary: Nickle Arts Museum)
- Sauer, Carl O. (1963) *Land & Life: a selection from the writings of C.O. Sauer* (Berkeley: U. Cal. Press)
- Spirn, Anne Whiston (1984) *The Granite Garden: Urban Nature and Human Design* (NY: Basic Books)
- Treib, Marc (ed.) (1993) *Modern Landscape Architecture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press)
- Von Baeyer, E (1984) *Rhetoric and Roses: A History of Canadian Gardening* (Markham: Fitzhenry and Whiteside)
- Waldheim, Charles (2006) *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*, New York, NY: Princeton Architectural Press
- Watts, May Theilgaard (1957) *Reading the Landscape of America* (Rochester: Nature Study Guild)
- Wilson, Alexander (1991) *The Culture of Nature: North American Landscape from Disney to the Exxon Valdez* (Toronto: Between the Lines)

Ideas

- Bachelard, Gaston (1958) *The Poetics of Space* (Boston: Beacon Press)
- Castells, M. (1989) *The Informational City* (Oxford: Blackwells)
- Davis, Ann and Beverly A Sandalack (2005) *Sense of Place: a collection of essays* (Calgary: Nickle Arts Museum)
- Kingwell, Mark (2000) *The World We Want: Virtue, Vice and the Good Citizen* (Penguin)
- Knox, Paul (ed.) (1988) *The Design Professions and the Built Environment* (London: Croom Helm Ltd.)
- Norberg-Schulz, Christian (1979) *Genius Loci: Towards a Phenomenology of Architecture* (NY: Rizzoli)
- Quantrill, M. (1987) *The Environmental Memory: Man and Architecture in the Landscape of Ideas* (New York: Schocken Books)
- Thompson, Darcy (1917, reprinted 1992) *On Growth and Form* (Dover Reprint)
- Venturi, R. (1966) *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture* (New York: Doubleday)

Graphic Communication

- Cantrell, Bradley (2010) *Digital Drawing for Landscape Architecture* (Wiley)
- Ching, Frank (1975 and newer versions) *Architectural Graphics* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold)
- Farrelly, Lorraine *Drawing for Urban Design: Portfolio Skills Series*
- Kirby, Robert, Andrei Nicolai and Beverly A. Sandalack (2002) *Making Better Civic Places: Urban Design at the University of Calgary* (Faculty of Environmental Design)
- Landscape Architecture Magazine* especially issues that focus on drawings or design awards
- Lynch, Kevin and Garry Hack (1984) *Site Planning* (MIT Press: Cambridge, Mass.)
- Places, A Forum for Environmental Design*, Summer 1996, Vol.10, No.3, and other issues
- Porter, Tom and Sue Goodman (1985) *Manual of Graphic Techniques 4 for architects, graphic designers and artists* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons)
- Smith, Elizabeth A.T. and Russell Fergusen (1994) *Urban Revisions* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press)
- Stirling, Norman (1970) *Introduction to Technical Drawing* (Toronto: The MacMillan Company)
- Tal, Daniel (2009) *Google SketchUp for Site Design* (Wiley)

Tufte, Edward (various) *Beautiful Evidence, Envisioning Information, The Visual Display of Quantitative Information* (Cheshire, CT: Graphics Press)
Walker, T.D. (1977) *Plan Graphics* (PDA Publishers: Indiana)
Wang, Thomas C. (1979) *Plan and Section Drawing* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold)
White, Edward T. (1983) *Site Analysis* (Tucson, Ariz.: Architectural Media Ltd.)

Technical

American Planning Association (2006) *Planning and Urban Design Standards* (Wiley Graphic Standards)
The Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, (1985) *The Canadian Style: A Guide to Writing and Editing* (Toronto and London: Dundurn Press)
Neufert, Ernst (various editions) *Architects' data* (London: Crosby Lockwood Staples)
Turabian, Kate (1982) *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, Dissertations* (London: Heinemann)
Zeisel, John (1984) *Inquiry by Design: Tools for Environment-Behaviour Research* (Cambridge University Press)

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. Submissions must come from an official University of Calgary (ucalgary) email account.
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/contact>); 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>).