

Urban Design and Planning 423/523 Spring 2018 (3.0)
INTRODUCTION TO URBAN DESIGN

Class Meeting Time and Place: Tuesday & Thursday 10:00-11:20am Gould Hall 440
Instructor: Dan Abramson, PhD, Associate Professor
Office phone/voice mail: 543-2089; e-mail abramson@uw.edu
Office Hours: Gould Hall 448J; Thursdays 11:30am -12:30pm or by appointment
Course website: <https://catalyst.uw.edu/workspace/abramson/44308>

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course introduces students to the discipline and practice of urban design, through a combination of classic and contemporary readings, class discussion and lectures, and hands-on exercises analyzing urban environment of Seattle. Students will become familiar with key theoretical foundations of urban design, develop their capacity to engage in critique, and evaluate urban design projects, policies and settings using arguments based on the readings and the results of their analytical exercises. The main components of the course are as follows:

- Seminar readings, reflection and discussion, both in-class and online
- Design review meeting attendance, observation and note-taking
- Field exercises to develop spatial, visual and graphic literacy for urban design purposes:
 - imageability studies, thematic mapping, textual and photographic "thick description" of urban environments
 - observation of social behavior in public space
- Case study final report synthesizing findings from these other components urban design issues in a particular case or site, and proposing appropriate design strategies or design-related policy recommendations of a level commonly associated with professional community-scale design and neighborhood planning projects.

UrbDP 523 is a required course for the Master of Urban Planning Specialization in Urban Design, and also counts towards either the core requirement or the urban design methods requirement for the Urban Design Certificate.

FORMAT

The course meets for two 80-minute seminar-style sessions each week. Class meetings feature discussions of the reading, lectures by the instructor or guest speakers, and/or presentations of field work by students. Class meetings are for discussion and interaction. Students who arrive late, leave early or absent themselves for part of the session without explanation disrupt the class, and will lose points for participation. Similarly, the use of laptops or handheld devices in class is also disruptive (despite their utility for taking notes or looking up material relevant to class discussion); *no phone use in class, computers only if needed, and only for seminar support*. Students are expected to read the assigned texts *before* the class meeting for which they are scheduled; to post their comments on the course online discussion board as prompted (<https://catalyst.uw.edu/gopost/board/abramson/39630/>); and to participate fully in class discussion. Comments on each of the readings must be posted to the online discussion board by 5pm on the day before those readings are scheduled to be discussed. Assignments are to be submitted to Canvas.

READINGS

The course schedule below shows the topics for each class meeting, and the relevant texts. Readings are given as references for the topics of discussion for each session. In some cases the instructor may replace or supplement these with other readings, especially if relevant to the direction of seminar discussion. Course readings include classic essays on theory, commentaries on the discipline of urban design, and writings about urban environmental research and design methodology. Readings are either provided on Canvas as web links or scanned electronic files, or are found in the main course texts:

- *Companion to Urban Design*, edited by Tridib Banerjee and Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris (Routledge/Taylor & Francis, 2011)
- *The Urban Design Reader*, 2nd Edition, edited by Michael Larice and Elizabeth Macdonald (London and New York: Routledge, 2013).

Both are available in e-book format for limited readings/downloads/printing through UW Libraries. You may wish to purchase or borrow hardcopies of these texts for your personal use.

Other key texts are: Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (NY: Vintage Books, 1961); Kevin Lynch, *The Image of the City* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1960); Kevin Lynch, *What Time is This Place* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1972); Whyte, William H., *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* (Washington, D.C.: Conservation Foundation, 1980). For those of you who are already familiar with these texts, a further key text is Arendt, Hannah, *The Human Condition* (University of Chicago Press, 2nd ed., intro. Margaret Canovan, 1998), available electronically at <https://archive.org/stream/ArendtHannahTheHumanCondition2nd1998>

Other readings will also be available on reserve in the Built Environments Library.

COURSE PROJECT

In addition to discussing readings, students must complete a course project, focused on a case study, which incorporates all the assignments and exercises apart from the readings. A detailed description of the course project is provided separately.

MATERIALS AND EQUIPMENT

Digital camera; scale ruler (engineering); note/sketchbook; graph paper; colored felt-tip pens and/or pencils. Students who already have at least a rudimentary knowledge of Photoshop, and/or SketchUp or other 3-D architectural modeling software are encouraged to use that software to complete some of the exercises.

EVALUATION

Grades will be determined as follows:

- 5% – Case study topic proposal
- 10% – Participation in class discussion of readings and exercises
- 10% – Participation in online discussion of readings
- 10% – Design review observation notes
- 15% – “Kevin Lynch” micro- and macro-scale observation of urban environment
- 15% – “William Whyte” observation of social life in public space
- 35% – Final report on case study

COMMUNITY

Treat others as you would like to be treated. Be respectful of people and separate ideas from the people themselves. Be prepared to offer constructive critique.

Plagiarism will not be tolerated. For more information, please refer to UW guidelines, at <http://depts.washington.edu/grading/pdf/AcademicResponsibility.pdf>.

If you have a disability that makes it difficult for you to carry out the coursework as outlined and/or requires accommodations, such as recruiting note-takers, readers, or extended time on assignments, please contact me, or the UW Disability Services Office, within the first week of the quarter. The DSO website and contact information is at <http://hr.uw.edu/dso/>.

SCHEDULE

<i>Topics</i>	<i>Readings</i>
Tuesday March 27	Introduction to course and to each other
Thursday March 30 Epistemological theories of urban design For discussion: What is urban design? How is it different from architectural or landscape architectural design? How is it different from urban planning?	Anne Vernez Moudon, "A Catholic Approach to Organizing what Urban Designers Should Know," <i>The Urban Design Reader</i> , pp.235-257. Alex Krieger, "Where and How Does Urban Design Happen?" <i>The Urban Design Reader</i> , pp.585-594. Sternberg, Ernest. "An Integrative Theory of Urban Design." <i>Journal of the American Planning Association</i> 66(3) (Summer 2000): 265-78.
Friday, March 31, 5:00pm – Course Project Case Study Topic Due. Submit to Canvas.	
Tuesday April 3	
Historical paradigms and the appreciation of complexity For discussion: Think of all the urban environments you have experienced; in what ways have you seen Le Corbusier's vision realized? In what ways Jane Jacobs's? In what ways are the cities you know like trees? What are some examples you know of non-tree-like structures in cities?	Robert Fishman, "The Open and the Enclosed: Shifting Paradigms in Modern Urban Design," <i>Companion to Urban Design</i> , pp.30-40. Le Corbusier, "'The Pack-Donkey's Way and the Man's Way' and 'A Contemporary City'" <i>The Urban Design Reader</i> , pp.259-286. Jane Jacobs, <i>The Death and Life of Great American Cities</i> , Ch.1 "Introduction" and Ch.3 "The uses of sidewalks: contact" (in <i>The Urban Design Reader</i>); also Ch.2 "The uses of sidewalks: safety", Ch.9 "The need for small blocks", Ch.10 "The need for aged buildings", Ch.16 "Gradual money and cataclysmic money". Christopher Alexander, "City is Not a Tree," <i>The Urban Design Reader</i> , pp.422-462.
Thursday April 5	
Method: off-site and on-site observation - What to look for in an urban environment and how to look	Allan B. Jacobs, <i>Looking at Cities</i> (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1985), "Clues," pp.30-83; "Seeing Change" and "Observing the Unknown," pp.99-132. Book on reserve. These chapters also on reserve as a separately bound photocopy. K. Lynch, <i>What Time is this Place?</i> Introduction, and Ch.1, "Cities Transforming," pp.1-28; Ch.6 "Boston Time," pp.135-162.
In-class Exercise: "What (time) is this place?" warm-up qualitative visual analysis – photo interpretation	

Topics

Readings

Tuesday April 10

Theory: Cognitive-perceptual bases for conceiving of urban design, and for analyzing urban space-time

K. Lynch, *The Image of the City*, Ch.1, “The Image of the Environment,” pp. 1-13 (also in *The Urban Design Reader*).
K. Lynch, “A Walk Around the Block.”
Gordon Cullen, “Introduction to the Concise Townscape,” *The Urban Design Reader*, pp.331-348.

Thursday April 12

Method: cognitive mapping, thematic mapping and photo-interpretation

K. Lynch, *The Image of the City*, Chapter III, “The City Image and Its Elements,” pp. 46-90 (also in *The Urban Design Reader*); Appendix B, “The Use of the Method,” pp. 140-159; Appendix C, “Two Examples of Analysis,” pp.160-181.

In-class Exercise: Cognitive mapping – how city image is structured in your memory

Sunday, April 15, 11:59pm – Field Exercise #1 individual Walk Around the Block essay DUE to Canvas.

Monday, April 16, 11:59pm – Field Exercise #1 team City Image Map DUE to Catalyst dropbox.

Tuesday April 17

No readings; present and discuss Field Exercise #1

Thursday April 19

Urban Elements, Typo-morphology and New Urbanism

Anne Vernez Moudon, “Getting to Know the Built Landscape: Typomorphology,” from *The Urban Design Reader* (1st edition only), available for this course as a separate e-reading
Leon Krier, “ ‘Critiques’ and ‘Urban Components’ ,” on e-reserve.
Congress for the New Urbanism, “Charter of the New Urbanism,” *The Urban Design Reader*, pp.896-905.
Allan Jacobs & Donald Appleyard, “Toward an Urban Design Manifesto,” *The Urban Design Reader*, pp.594-623.
Brenda Case Scheer, “A Crisis in the Urban Landscape”, etc., *The Urban Design Reader*, pp.837-895.

Tuesday April 24

Elements of the Public Realm I – Places/Nodes/Cores: *being* in public

Mark Francis, “Mixed-life Places,” *Companion to Urban Design*, Chap.33.
Gary Hack, “Urban Flux,” *Companion to Urban Design*, Chap.34.

For discussion: What questions would you “ask” the public places you are investigating?

Ronald Lee Fleming, "Questions to Ask a Place." *Places: A Forum of Environmental Design* 6(4): 12-13. E-reading, and online at <http://repositories.cdlib.org/ced/places/vol6/iss4/RonaldLeeFleming>

Thursday April 26

Method: Observation in public spaces. In-class video

Whyte, William H., *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces* (Washington, D.C.: Conservation Foundation, 1980). On reserve.
Or, if you are already familiar with William H. Whyte’s work, read instead: Arendt, Hannah, *The Human Condition*, Chapters 1, all of Part II, and Chaps. 24, 25, 28 and 29. Available online at Internet Archive, <https://archive.org/stream/ArendtHannahTheHumanCondition2nd1998>

Topics

Readings

Tuesday May 1

Elements of the Public Realm II –
 Networks/Paths: *moving* (and being) in
 public

Allan B. Jacobs, “Conclusion: Great Streets and City Planning,” *The Urban Design Reader*, pp.583-593.
 Ellis, William C., “The Spatial Structure of Streets,” in Stanford Anderson, ed.,
On Streets (MIT Press, 1986): 114-132. E-reading.

Elements of the Public Realm III –
 Building presence (facades, edges,
 bulk): bounding public space

Schumacher, Thomas, "Buildings and Streets: Notes on Configuration
 and Use," in Stanford Anderson, ed., *On Streets*: 132-149. E-reading.
 Scherr, Richard, "The Urban Streetwall Redefined," in *Architectural
 Education: Where We Are/Proceedings of the 80th Annual Meeting of
 the Association of Collegiate Schools of Architecture* (Washington DC:
 ACSA Press, 1992), pp. 148-153. E-reading.

Thursday May 3

Sense of place

Edward Relph, “Prospects for Places” *The Urban Design Reader*, pp.725-
 740.

For discussion: What were/are the
 “third places” in the area you are
 investigating?

Christian Norberg-Schulz, “The Phenomenon of Place,” *The Urban Design
 Reader*, pp.741-775.
 Ray Oldenburg, “The Problem of Place in America,” *The Urban Design
 Reader*, pp.776-806.
 Rem Koolhaas, “The Generic City,” *The Urban Design Reader*, pp.977-1014.
 Michael Southworth & D. Ruggeri, “Beyond Placelessness: Place Identity
 and the Global City,” *Companion to Urban Design*, Chap.37.

Monday, May 7, 11:59pm – Field Exercise #2 Observation of Social Life in Public Space DUE to Canvas.

Tuesday May 8

No readings; present and discuss Field Exercise #2

Thursday May 10

NO CLASS – INSTRUCTOR AWAY AT CONFERENCE

Tuesday May 15

Public Process: Intervention types
 - Regulation and management
 - Design review
 - Design guidelines
 - Design charrettes
 - Participatory/Community Design

William C. Baer, “Customs, Norms, Rules, Regulations, and Standards
 in Design Practice,” *Companion to Urban Design*, Chap.21.
 John Punter, “Developing Urban Design as Public Policy: Best Practice
 Principles for Design Review and Development Management,”
Journal of Urban Design, 12:2 (2007), pp.167-202.
 Brenda Case Scheer, “The Debate on Design Review,” *The Urban
 Design Reader* (1st edition only), available for this course as a separate
 e-reading

Thursday May 17

Public Process: Intervention types
 (continued)

For discussion: How and why are/might
 each of these types of intervention be
 appropriate and implemented in the
 urban site you have investigated?
 How might they have produced
 different designs, and how would
 those differences align or conflict
 with the various normative visions of
 a good urban public realm presented
 in different readings?

Matthew Carmona, “Decoding Design Guidance,” *Companion to Urban
 Design*, Chap.22.
 John Punter, “Design Guidelines in American Cities: Conclusions,” *The
 Urban Design Reader*, pp.1615-1661.
 Douglas S. Kelbaugh, “The Design Charrette,” *Companion to Urban
 Design*, Chap.24.
 Jeffrey Hou, “Citizen Design: Participation and Beyond,” *Companion to
 Urban Design*, Chap.25.

Topics

Readings

Tuesday May 22

“Other” Urbanisms I: Multicultural sense of place

For discussion: how is the public realm defined and designed, multiculturally?

Margaret Crawford, selections from “Everyday Urbanism,” *The Urban Design Reader*, pp.939-976.

Denise Lawrence-Zuñiga, “Influences of Anthropology on Urban Design,” *Companion to Urban Design*, Chap.10.

Clara Irazabal, “Ethnoscapes,” *Companion to Urban Design*, Chap.42.

Abramson, Manzo and Hou, “From Ethnic Enclave to Multi-ethnic Translocal Community: Contested Identities and Urban Design in Seattle’s Chinatown-International District.” E-reading.

Thursday May 24

“Other” Urbanisms II: Ecological and Resilient Urban Design

Anne Whiston Spirn, “Ecological Urbanism,” *Companion to Urban Design*, Chap.45.

Peter Newman et al, “Urban Resilience: Cities of Fear and Hope,” *The Urban Design Reader*, pp.569-579.

Mahyar Arefi, “Design for Resilient Cities: Reflections from a Studio,” *Companion to Urban Design*, Chap.52.

Tuesday June 29

“Other” Urbanisms III: Urban Design in Recently, Rapidly Urbanizing Societies

Shelton, Barrie, et al. *The Making of Hong Kong: From Vertical to Volumetric* (Hoboken: Taylor & Francis, 2010). UW Library eBook.

Marshall, Richard. *Emerging Urbanity: Global Urban Projects in the Asia Pacific Rim* (London; New York: Spon Press, 2003), Chaps.1, 2, 6, 7, and especially 11. E-reading.

Vinit Mukhija, “Urban Design for a Planet of Informal Cities,” *Companion to Urban Design*, Chap.43.

Thursday May 31

For discussion: Now that the course is ended, how do you find urban design as discussed here useful or relevant to your own studies and career aspirations?

LAST CLASS – Wrap-up and in-class online evaluation – bring laptops/mobile devices!

Friday, June 8, 5pm - Final Project Due in Canvas.