

# Urban Design Theory

EVDS 671 H (3-0)

Winter 2012 Friday 09:30 - 12:20

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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, case studies, 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 and 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 these topics:

Why Urban Design?

- overview of the evolution of urban form, and the planning and design ideas influencing urban development
- evolution of the idea of urban design as an approach
- issues in contemporary urban design

Urban process and form

- the nature of cities / cities and nature - a landscape approach to urban design
- urban morphology as an approach to urban design
- 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

The case of Calgary

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

2. **Seminars** on selected urban design theories and theorists will build on the framework of the lectures. Each student (or pair) 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 the seminar presentations of their peers.

### 3. Short project

Students will document and analyse a local public space from a circulated list and critically evaluate it in terms of the concepts and theories discussed in the course. Students will prepare presentation panels summarizing and illustrating the analysis, and also submit the work digitally. Guidelines and requirements for the panels and digital files will be provided at the beginning of the course.

**Note:** A detailed course outline including course schedule, project briefs and due dates will be distributed at the start of the course.

### Evaluation

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

Seminar	40%
Seminar critique	10%
Short project	
documentation and analysis	25%
evaluation according to concepts/theories	25%

**Total** **100%**

#### Notes:

A passing grade (B-, or the equivalent in 4-point scale or percentage) 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.

### Special Budgetary Considerations

Site visits will be possible on foot or by LRT. Required base maps and air photos will be provided, or will be available from the MADGIC Centre or on-line, and any additional information and associated costs will be at the discretion of the student. Students should have basic drawing tools (pencils, a small selection of markers, scales, sketch rolls, other paper). Some costs for plotting and printing should be anticipated, as per EVDS practice.

### Readings

Specific readings will 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.

## URBAN DESIGN REFERENCES Short List

- Alexander, Christopher et al (1977) *A Pattern Language* (Oxford University Press)
- American Planning Association (2006) *Planning and Urban Design Standards* (Wiley Graphic Standards)
- 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)
- 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>
- 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)
- 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)
- 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)  
Benevelo, 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/](http://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)  
Condon, Patrick M. (ed.) (1996) *Sustainable Urban Landscapes: the Surrey Design Charrette* (UBC)  
Cullen, Gordon (1971) *The Concise Townscape* (London: Architectural Press)  
Clay, Grady (1973) *Close-Up: How to Read the American City* (University of Chicago Press)  
Duany, Andres and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk (1991) *Towns and Town-Making Principles* (Rizzoli)  
Duany, Andres, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Robert 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* (New Haven and London: 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, Beverly A. and Andrei Nicolai (2006) *The Calgary Project: urban form / urban life* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press)
- Sandalack, Beverly A. and Andrei 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 (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)
- 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)
- 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, Edwina (1984) *Rhetoric and Roses: A History of Canadian Gardening* (Markham: Fitzhenry and Whiteside)
- 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)
- 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

Ching, Frank (1975) *Architectural Graphics* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold)

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.)

McGinty, Tim (1976) *Drawing Skills in Architecture* (Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company)

*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 Ferguson (1994) *Urban Revisions* (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press)

Stirling, Norman (1970) *Introduction to Technical Drawing* (Toronto: The MacMillan Company)

Walker, T.D. (1977) *Plan Graphics* (PDA Publishers: Indiana)

Wang, Thomas C. (1979) *Plan and Section Drawing* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold)

Wester, Lari M. (1976) *Think and Do Graphics* (School of Landscape Architecture, University of Guelph)

White, Edward T. (1975) *Concept Sourcebook* (Tucson, Arizona: Architectural Ltd.)

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: Cambridge University Press)

## EVDS Grading Scale

Letter Grade	4-Point Scale	4-Point Range	Percent	Description
A+	4.00	4.00	92.5-100	Outstanding - evaluated by instructor
A	4.00	3.85-4.00	85-92.49	Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	3.50-3.84	80-84.99	Very good performance
B+	3.30	3.15-3.49	76-79.99	Good performance
B	3.00	2.85-3.14	73-75.99	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	2.50-2.84	70-72.99	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	2.15-2.49	66-69.99	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	63-65.99	
C-	1.70	1.50-1.84	60-62.99	
D+	1.30	1.15-1.49	56-59.99	
D	1.00	0.50-1.14	50-55.99	
F	0.00	0-0.49	0-49.99	

Note: A student who receives a B- or lower in two or more courses will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average unless the program recommends otherwise. Individual programs may require a higher minimum passing grade. A grade point value of 3.0 on the 4-Point Scale is the minimum acceptable average that a graduate student must maintain throughout the program as computed at the end of each registration anniversary year of the program. A student who receives a grade of F will normally be required to withdraw unless the program recommends otherwise.

## Notes:

1. This course may not be repeated for credit.
2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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
6. Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>)
7. Safewalk information (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>)
8. 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>).