

URBAN 527: Urban History, Ethics, Form, and Theory I

Course Syllabus



Description

How are cities built? How and why they evolve and transform differently? Particularly, how inhabitants make sense of that city structure?

The class will familiarize you with the elements and organization principles that structure urban form and contribute to the urbanization process. City building is an iterative process that unfolds both gradually and abruptly so creation of the urban form is an on-going process.

This course is the first of the two, history, ethics, form and theory (HEFT) courses in the MUP core curriculum that focuses more on urban form (F) and history (H). From participating in HEFT1 you will learn about formation and transformation of urban environments– all within the context of urban history (and urban societies particularly the experiences of non-elite groups including first nations, immigrants, women, queers and African Americans).

As design and planning professionals it's important for you to become familiar with the historical context of the contemporary urban form to be better able to situate your work.

The overarching goals of the course are:

- To develop an understanding of urban form in its historical context
- To be able to apply that knowledge to real world cases in class assignments and project

Structure

The course is structured as a lecture and seminar that emphasizes reading, discussion, research, writing, presentation, and active learning as primary modes of pedagogy. To promote engagement with the course and content, students will have opportunities to participate in in-class exercises, work in groups on assignments, and share their work with fellow classmates.

The course takes place IN PERSON with the exception of class periods noted in the schedule. In the virtual class periods you would be expected to either participate in a synchronistic (or asynchronistic) lecture or conduct work associated with class assignments under the supervision of the TA.

Course Readings

Required Readings: Weekly readings will be made available through Canvas.

Additional Readings: Warner, Sam Bass and Whittemore, Andrew H. *American Urban Form: A Representative History*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012 (available as an ebook through the UW library)

You may need to access books and other materials for the assignments through University Libraries (or through Interlibrary loans). Alternatively, you can purchase those through online retailers. Those materials have NOT been ordered for you at the University Bookstore. See course Canvas for an expanded list of readings.

Course Organization

The class meets on Mondays and Wednesdays. Ordinarily one class in the week is centered on discussions on the topic of the day, led by the instructor. The other class may be reserved for in class exercises, presentation, guest lectures or discussions.

Course requirements

Requirements for the course are rather straightforward: do the readings, show up on time, pay attention, engage in discussion and complete all course assignments.

Grading Summary

- 45% Exercises (In-class, homework, total of 4 exercises)
- 35% Urban Form Analysis (focusing on Mapping, Cataloging and Transect)
- 20% Participation with Course readings (determined through Reading Response, total of 10)

Your final grade will be determined based on the distribution provided above. Percentages will be converted into grades on the 4.0 scale according to the following table. Please note that the instructor retains the discretion to adjust this scale as necessary.

A: Excellent				B: Very Good				C: Competent			
97%+	4.0	96%	3.9	91%	3.4	86%	2.9	81%	2.4	76%	1.9
		95%	3.8	90%	3.3	85%	2.8	80%	2.3	75%	1.8
		94%	3.7	89%	3.2	84%	2.7	79%	2.2	74%	1.7
		93%	3.6	88%	3.1	83%	2.6	78%	2.1	73%	1.6
		92%	3.5	87%	3.0	82%	2.5	77%	2.0	72%	1.5

Reading Responses & Participation

Students are expected to share their reflections on the assigned readings no later than one hour before each class session. These responses should be brief (approximately 100 words) and focus on a key theme from the readings that resonates with the student, either through lived experience or in connection with other course material. Responses are required for 10 class periods, with a maximum of one submission per week.

While individual responses will not be graded, students will receive a total of 20 points for completing all 10 responses. Your participation grade will be based on the quality and consistency of these reading responses and your in-class interactions with peers and instructor over topics engaged.

Deadlines

There is a penalty of 10% grade reduction in case of late submission that is within three days of the due date; from day 4-7 you will lose 25% of your grade; submission after day 7 do not earn any credit.

Standard exceptions for major medical situations apply; such situations should be discussed with the instructor.

Academic honesty

This class is of course governed by all of the university's student policies, including those on plagiarism and multiple submissions. It is your responsibility to be familiar with these. More information is available on Canvas (<https://canvas.uw.edu/files/123772336>).

Participation

Participation in all classes is required. Students are expected to show up for all class periods having done the readings and participate in class discussions. Your instructor may solicit your response on different topics engaged in the class.

Resources for topics of urban form, urban history, planning theory and ethics

The UW Library holds an extensive collection of scholarly works of the topics engaged in the class. In addition, there are innumerable websites devoted to various aspects of planning and urban history and you may wish to visit some of them. Flagship periodicals in the field, most of which can be accessed through the University Library sites including; Journal of Urban History, and the Journal of Planning History, Planning Theory, Planning Theory and Practice, Journal of Planning Education and Research, Journal of American Planning Association, Planning Perspectives, and Urban Morphology, among others. There you will find current scholarship as well as reviews of recent publications.

Software

Data on elements of urban form are now commonly available in GIS, which are transforming our ability to understand existing land patterns and uses, and evaluate impacts of changes to these patterns. Therefore, basic knowledge of ArcGIS may be useful for completing certain projects in the course. As the UW has a site license with ESRI, current UW students can access ESRI software including ArcMap and ArcGIS Pro (<https://sites.uw.edu/arccgis/>).

Note that lack of familiarity with the software would not impede your ability to successfully complete the course assignments.

Disability Accommodation

Your experience in this class is important to us. If you have already established accommodations with Disability Resources for Students (DRS; <https://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs>), please communicate your approved accommodations to me at your earliest convenience so we can discuss your needs in this course. The website for the DRS provides other resources for students and faculty for making accommodations.

Religious Accommodation

Washington state law requires that UW develop a policy for the accommodation of student absences or significant hardship due to reasons of faith or conscience, or for organized religious activities. The UW's policy, including more information about how to request an accommodation, is available at Religious Accommodations Policy (<https://registrar.washington.edu/staffandfaculty/religious-accommodations-policy>). Accommodations must be requested within the first two weeks of this course using the Religious Accommodations Request form (<https://registrar.washington.edu/students/religious-accommodations-request>).

Safe Space

We use the definition of safe space provided by the Safe Space Network: a place where anyone can fully express, without fear of being made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of biological sex, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, cultural background, nationality, religious affiliation, age, or physical or mental ability. However safe space doesn't mean your ideas won't be challenged, or you won't potentially feel uncomfortable. It does mean that you won't be made to feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or unsafe on account of the characteristics mentioned.

Sensitive topics

The class may cover a wide range of sensitive topics in urban history including genocide, enslavement, various forms of oppression and sexuality, among others. This includes both challenging conversations and the occasional use of imagery as well as historical terminology related to these topics. (<https://www.cnn.com/2020/07/06/us/racism-words-phrases-slavery-trnd/index.html>) This is a graduate level class, and it is expected that we will all approach these topics with sensitivity, thoughtfulness, and openness, and recognize that different people will have their own relationships to this material. Be respectful of diverse opinions and allow everyone to contribute in the discussions.

Technology Protocol

Cell Phones and other Internet distractions: Please be courteous and refrain from personal digital activity during class time.

Some classes may be held virtually to accommodate non-local guest speakers and instructor's conference commitments. These could be in either in a synchronist or asynchronistic format. The Zoom links will be provided through Canvas. For the virtual classes, please review the [Zoom Etiquettes](#):

- i) Log into Zoom a few minutes prior to the meeting time
- ii) Test your camera, headset and microphone to ensure they are working properly
- iii) Find a quiet place; ensure that your background is appropriate
- iv) If you need to speak raise hands or submit a question via chat box.
- v) Refrain from "side conversations" that will distract students from the ongoing conversation.
- vi) Please have your cameras on as it better stimulates the face-to-face classroom experience (Bauer, 2020)

AI Models Policy

It is not allowed to use artificial intelligence language models, such as ChatGPT, for course assignments except as explicitly recommended by the instructor. Students are expected to write in your own words using a style guide. You may choose from any common style guide, such as Chicago, MLA or APA. Use Zotero, Endnote or similar bibliographic software to organize your citations.

Absences

When absent, it is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor in advance (or as close to the class period as possible in the case of an unexpected absence), and to request appropriate make-up work. The instructor will determine if make-up work is possible and/or to modify assignment or course grading. For chronic absences, the instructor may award an incomplete grade after the 8th week, or recommend the student contact their academic adviser to consider a hardship withdrawal (known as a Registrar Drop).