

New York University
Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

Introduction to Urban Design
URPL-GP.1620, Fall Semester 2011

This course will concentrate on design, research, interpretation, and analysis of urban spaces in the New York region, United States, and abroad. As inherent in an “introductory” course we will have limited opportunity to delve deeply into each topic, but will center discussion around a single focus – the forces that shape urban form. In the end, each of you will have developed a new awareness for the built environment and the critical elements in successful place making.

Section 1

Instructors: John Fontillas, AIA
Eric Galipo, AICP

Thursdays, 6:45pm – 8:25pm
25 West 4th St., Room C17

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Work Phone: 212-677-6030
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Section 2

Instructor: Steven Stainbrook, AICP

Thursdays, 6:45pm – 8:25pm
25 West 4th St., Room C10

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Phone: 917-291-0776(mobile) 212-677-6030(work)
Office Hours: contact to arrange

Format

The format of the course will be a mix of instructor presentations, discussion sessions, student presentations, field trips, and studio design work. Lectures will not be a recitation of required reading, but a time to connect this important background to current design approaches, professional practice, and the discipline of urban design. Ultimately, one should begin to include spatial analysis as a complementary toolkit for your planning and policy bailiwick.

Urban Design Labs

Immediately after class, from 8:35pm to 9:35pm, both sections will participate in Urban Planning Lab sessions. The lab sessions will alternate between **Computer Lab sessions** in **Tisch Hall Room LC19** and **Seminar Discussions** in **Silver Hall Room 414**. Please see the attached schedule for dates.

These sessions will focus on computer applications, drawing skills and site analysis and will assist you in completing your design projects. They are required parts of the course - attendance will contribute to your grade.

Sketchbooks

All students are required to keep field notes in a sketchbook and will be encouraged to develop their own ability to freehand draw. Notes, sketches, paste-on graphics, and photographs may be kept in your notebook. You are encouraged to record ideas for your ongoing course projects and reflect on class discussions as you begin to use New York as your daily lab. Sketchbooks will be collected twice during the semester. There will be NO letter grade attached to this review – it is pass or fail. As long as you make a legitimate attempt to actively use your sketchbook, full credit will be awarded.

Class Participation is expected and will be reflected in your final grade by up to one-half letter grade. A lively exchange will make a more fulfilling experience for all.

Urban Design Projects

Three urban design projects will be assigned during the semester. The projects will be based on realistic professional assignments and will focus on design issues such as scale, program, context, infrastructure, and environmental factors. Students will complete each assignment as teams, with each group presenting their findings to the entire class for critique. Presentations should be graphic in nature and include images, diagrams, illustrative drawings, and models. A Project Brief will be given out containing specific information about each of the projects.

Project #1 – Urban Space Observation and Site Analysis

Assigned September 8

Final Review in class - **Thursday, September 22, 6:45-8:25pm**

Project #2 – Mixed Use Development

Assigned September 29

Final Review at Puck Bldg, Rudin Forum - **Thursday, October 27, 6:45 - 9:30pm**

Project #3 – Neighborhood Master Plan

Assigned November 3

Final Review at Puck Bldg, Rudin Forum - **Thursday, December 15, 4:30 – 9:30pm**

Required Reading

There is one required textbook, available at the NYU Professional Bookstore (530 La Guardia Place).

- Bacon, Edmund, N. (1969 / rev.1976). *Design of Cities*. New York: Penguin Books Ltd.

Other suggested readings include the following books, which will be on Course Reserve at Bobst:

- Lynch, Kevin. *The Image of the City*. Boston: MIT Press. 1960 / rev. 1996.
- Jacobs, Allan B. *Great Streets*. Boston. MIT Press. 1993.
- Koolhaas, Rem. *SMLXL (Small Medium Large Xtra Large)*. Monacelli Press. 1995 / rev. 1997.
- Garvin, Alexander. *The American City, What Works, What Doesn't, 2nd Edition*. New York. McGraw Hill. 2002.
- Kostof, Spiro. *The City Shaped: Urban Patterns and Meanings through History*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co. 1999.
- Steiner, Frederick and Kent Butler. *Planning and Urban Design Standards, Student Edition*. Hoboken, NJ: J. Wiley. 2007.

We will also be handing out additional articles and reading excerpts during the semester.

Art and Drawing Supplies

Students are required to purchase these art materials for their own use during the semester:

- Sketchbook (9"x12" minimum size)
- Sharpie fine point permanent marker – black
- Pentel sign pen – black
- Pilot razor point pen – black
- Roll of white tracing paper – 18" long
- Engineering scale – triangular plastic with 1:10 to 1:60 scales
- Prismacolor pencils – set of 12 colors

The sketchbook, Pilot razor point pen, and engineering scale should be purchased for the second class session. Items may be purchased at:

- Pearl Paint – 308 Canal Street (212-431-7932)
- Utrecht Art – 111 Fourth Avenue @ 11th Street (212-777-5353)
- The Art Store – 1-5 Bond Street between Broadway and Lafayette (212-533-2444)

The three studio projects will require additional material to be purchased by the team:

- Foamcore board (30"x40") white or black (for mounting graphics / building models)
- Double stick tape and/or white glue
- Laser-jet printing of presentation boards – we will provide you with the name and location of a printing service house where you can get these done.

Grading

Grades are determined per the Wagner School of Public Service guidelines and scale. Please refer to the Academic Policies page on the School's website for details and the School's policy on academic honesty.

1. Project #1 (20%) – including reading assignment
2. Project #2 (20%) – including reading assignment
3. Project #3 (50%) – including reading assignment
4. Sketchbooks and Exercises (10%)

Lastly . . .

We have invited several guest lecturers to present to the class. As soon as they are confirmed, we will notify both class sections. (We welcome any student brave enough to attend lectures in both sections.) We also reserve the right to change reading assignments and activities due to inevitable schedule conflicts.