Introduction to Site Planning and Urban Design
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Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey

Fall 2017
Monday/Wednesday 5:00 to 6:20 PM

Busch Campus
Biomedical Engineering Building (BEM)
Room 126
599 Taylor Road, Piscataway, NJ

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Course Description This course is a DESIGN CLASS. Site planning and urban design often starts with understanding how to evaluate a place and to dissect the essential elements that make them special, or not so much. Look around and be prepared to discuss how we have got to this point in time. What are the places that excite our senses – did they happen by chance or was there a design intervention? This course will encourage you to “pick up the sharpie” and draw design alternatives. Urban design is about creating places of lasting value that are responsive to the essential qualities of place making. Lectures and discussions will be supplemented by multiple exercises and group projects that will provide students with practical experience for a fundamental understanding of urban design and planning.

Design matters considerably, for both functional as well as aesthetic reasons. From a functional perspective, design can be a powerful influence on human behavior — it can promote or deter human interaction, inspire a sense of security or provoke apprehension, provide or deny access, indicate acceptance or rejection. It can improve efficiencies in infrastructure and service provisions; and it strongly conditions transportation choices. An appropriately supportive physical environment will encourage walking, bicycling and the use of public transit, whereas a barren environment will discourage these modes of transportation and increase auto-dependence.

From an aesthetic viewpoint, design plays an important role in the quality-of-life assessments which we all make on a daily basis, and it influences the location choices and investment decisions of both residents and employers. A well-designed environment is much more than the sum of its parts — it represents an asset to the community, it enriches its users, and it creates real estate value. A bleak and
uninspiring physical environment will not achieve these ends — it will alienate its users, reinforce feelings of disenfranchisement and vulnerability and lead to disinvestment and community fragmentation.

This course is intended to shift the focus from “designing for cars” to “designing for people.” The most important task of design is to facilitate the creation of places, which are spatially defined entities with a recognizable identity and a distinct character. Places are the physical foundation of community. This course will cover architectural and site design standards that are narrative, but also contain illustrations and photographs. These are the examples that reflect the desired architectural and site design components to guide architects and planners involved with community building through new construction and redevelopment.

Consider also that in 2017, the United States continues to face an epidemic of health issues including high levels of stress, diabetes, cancer and other diseases attributed to our sedentary lifestyles. All the while, we have tolerated the design of places that continue our dependence on the automobile. Apathy and benign neglect towards design has shifted the focus from the oldest form of transportation we know – our feet. Charting the right course for our future requires a team of generalists, including urban planners, urban designers, architects, landscape architects, engineers, public health professionals, and many others who understand the complexity of the many supporting and opposing forces that influence public policy. This is often not easy when faced with competing interests at times when planning and policy decisions are being formulated by small towns as well as big cities and in the laws and regulations of New Jersey and the many branches of the Federal government.

**Course Objectives**

- To introduce students to the application of basic urban design;
- to gain practice in the basic skills of site planning and urban design analysis;
- to gain an appreciation of both the process and product of the design of the built environment;
- to emphasize the need for planners and other designers to learn how to feel comfortable with “picking up the sharpie”
- to provide practice in visual, graphic and spatial literacy.

**Required Readings** There are no textbooks for this class. Instead the various reading and video assignments for this class will be posted as a PDF or video link under the RESOURCES section on Sakai. All readings and videos should be completed BEFORE the class based on the FALL 2017 CLASS SCHEDULE. The readings may be supplemented, amended or replaced depending on the specific current topics being discussed in class. Students are encouraged to post interesting and related topical readings or videos on the FORUM section of the Class SAKAI site.

**Course Materials**

- 1 – spiral or permanent bound sketch book - prefer it to be 6” x 9” – Portrait or landscape
- 2- or more drawing pencils, fine point sharpies and colored markers
- 1- Engineering Scale (Make sure it is an engineering scale)
- Roll of 18” Trace Paper or trace paper pad 11X17
- Tubular Carrying Case (optional, but a good investment)
GRADING & POLICIES

Grade Distribution
- Attendance /Class Participation: 15%
- In class exercises/Sketch Book Review  15%
- In class Mid-Term Exam/Quizzes: 25%
- Class Project & Group Presentation: 25%
- Final Take home exam 20%
- Extra Credit - TBD

Attendance & Class Participation: Attendance and class participation is mandatory, especially when guest speakers are scheduled, since the class format is not solely lecture-oriented. Please note that attendance and participation will count significantly towards your final grade for the class. Each student will be expected to sign the attendance sheet at the start of class. Please note that signing in for other students is a violation of the Rutgers Integrity Policy. Students are expected to contribute to the class with respect to the readings and in-class discussions.

Students are expected to attend all classes; if you expect to miss one or two classes, please use the University absence reporting website https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/ to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me.

In-class exercises/Sketch Book Review: All students will be required to have a sketch book where regular take home assignments and other class sketches will be completed. The totality of this book will be evaluated at the end of the semester. This sketch book will also complement the drawings required for in-class and take home drawing exercises. These exercises will be completed in-class or returned just prior to the start of the next class.

Mid-Term Exam: This exam will focus on the topics discussed in class and in the readings assigned. One or a series of preparation quizzes on the exam material may be given with or without notice.

Class Project: This project is intended to be very interactive and visual. From the first day of class, you can be preparing for the completion of the final project by observing the world around you. The world is a big place but as planners and designers, you have the ability to have a positive influence on how things work. Instructions for the class project will be provided in more detail but it will involve PREPARING A formal site plan design boards reflecting the design tenants we learn in class and presenting it in draft and final form. Work will be in groups as assigned.

Final Exam: The Final Exam will be a take home exam on Sakai
Rutgers University’s Academic Integrity Policy:

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, failure to cite sources, fabrication and falsification, stealing ideas, and deliberate slanting of research designs to achieve a pre-conceived result. Misconduct will not be tolerated. Penalties for misconduct can range from failing an assignment/exam or the class to even dismissal from the university.

The University’s Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml).

Academic Misconduct: A Bloustein School Perspective

Academic misconduct includes cheating, plagiarism, failure to cite sources, fabrication and falsification, stealing ideas, and deliberate slanting of research designs to achieve a pre-conceived result. We talk about misconduct and ethical behavior in classes and expectations are set forth in student handbooks and catalogues. Penalties for misconduct can range from failing an assignment/exam or dismissal from the university.

The Bloustein School is appending this memorandum to your course syllabus because we recently have detected obvious cases of plagiarism. We have found far fewer cases of other forms of academic misconduct, but we find several every year. It is imperative that you understand that unethical academic conduct is intolerable, and it is completely preventable.

Academic misconduct almost always happens for two reasons. One is ignorance of academic rules and practices. For example, in virtually every recent plagiarism case in the School, material has been taken from an Internet site and placed in text without appropriate note or attribution. You must learn the proper rules for attribution. If you are not sure, ask your instructor! If you do not know the rules that govern the use of data sets, attribution, analysis and reporting of these sets, the faculty will help you. There is no such thing as a stupid question regarding this subject.

Pressure is the second common reason for academic misconduct. Students, faculty, every one of us are subject to deadline, financial, self-worth, peer, and other pressures. If you are potentially allowing pressure to drive you to misconduct, please step back and resist that urge. You can cope with pressure in a positive way by reaching out to friends, counselors, and faculty members. Within the Bloustein School community, you will find understanding people and positive direction.

The Bloustein School plays an important role in the planning and public policy agenda. Our work and our students must be above reproach.

CANCELLATION OF CLASSES

In the event of weather or other emergency, a “Campus Operating Status” page will be posted as a link from the New Brunswick Campus website, [http://nb.rutgers.edu](http://nb.rutgers.edu) Please refer to this page for updated information on closings, class cancellations or delayed openings, as well as bus schedules, parking lot availability, and dining hall and student recreation center hours. Please do not call the Rutgers Police for closing or class cancellation information.
DRAFT FALL 2017 CLASS SCHEDULE – v. 1

Introduction to Site Planning and Urban Design

WEEK 1 – Wednesday SEPT 6 - INTRODUCTIONS and COURSE OVERVIEW

Reading Assignment: No reading for this week
- Discussion of Schedule and class materials
- Video Assignment
- Sketch Book Assignment

WEEK 2 – SEPT 11 & 13 – NEIGHBORHOODS: CONTEXT, SCALE AND EDGES

See RESOURCES - Week 2
- Video Assignment
- Reading Assignment
- Sketch Book Assignment
- Class drawing exercise

WEEK 3 - SEPT 18 & 20 – ENVIRONMENTAL SITE ANALYSIS AND LAND USE CONSTRAINTS

See RESOURCES - Week 3
- Video Assignment
- Reading Assignment
- Sketch Book Assignment
- Class drawing exercise

WEEK 4 – SEPT 25 & 27 - ZONING AND THE MLUL - HOUSING, MIXED USE

See RESOURCES - Week 4 – ASSIGN GROUPS FOR FINAL PROJECT
- Video Assignment
- Reading Assignment
- Sketch Book Assignment
- Class drawing exercise

WEEK 5 – OCT 2 & 4 – DEVELOPMENT INFRASTRUCTURE

See RESOURCES - Week 5 – IDENTIFY FINAL PROJECT SITE LOCATION AND ISSUES
- Video Assignment
- Reading Assignment
- Sketch Book Assignment
- Class drawing exercise

WEEK 6 – OCT 9 & 11 – TRANSPORTATION, STREET AND PARKING LOT DESIGN

See RESOURCES - Week 6 – HAND OUT MID TERM STUDY GUIDE
- Video Assignment
- Reading Assignment
- Sketch Book Assignment
- Class drawing exercise
WEEK 7 – OCT 16 & 18 PUBLIC PLACES AND OPEN SPACES

See RESOURCES - Week 7 – WEDNESDAY - REVIEW OF MID-TERM STUDY GUIDE
  • Video Assignment
  • Reading Assignment
  • Sketch Book Assignment
  • Interactive Class drawing exercise

WEEK 8 - October 23 & 25 –

Monday, October 24, 2016 MID TERM EXAM

Wednesday, October 26, 2016 TENTATIVE GUEST SPEAKER - PROFESSOR TONY NELESSEN

WEEK 9 – October 30 & November 1 – VISIONING AND DESIGN CHARRETTES

See RESOURCES - Week 9 –
  • Video Assignment
  • Reading Assignment
  • Sketch Book Assignment
  • Interactive Class drawing exercise

WEEK 10 – Nov 6 & 8 – SKETCH–UP

See RESOURCES - Week 10 –
  • Video Assignment
  • Reading Assignment
  • Sketch Book Assignment
  • Interactive Class drawing exercise

WEEK 11 – Nov 13 & 15 LEED ND AND NEW URBANISM

See RESOURCES - Week 11 – EDGES, NEIGHBORHOODS
  • Video Assignment
  • Reading Assignment
  • Sketch Book Assignment
  • Interactive Class drawing exercise

WEEK 12 – Nov 20 & 22 (No Class) PEDESTRIAN DESIGN ELEMENTS

See RESOURCES - Week 12 –
  • Video Assignment
  • Reading Assignment
  • Sketch Book Assignment
  • Interactive Class drawing exercise
WEEK 13 – Nov 27 & 29: WRAP UP

- TURN IN SKETCH BOOK FOR REVIEW ON NOVEMBER 30, 2017
- RELEASE FINAL EXAM QUESTIONS VIA SAKAI - DISCUSSION OF TAKE HOME FINAL EXAM
- FINAL EXAM DUE ON SAKAI ON DECEMBER 15, 2017

WEEK 14 – Dec 4 & 6  FINAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS AS ASSIGNED

WEEK 15 – Dec 11 & 13  FINAL GROUP PRESENTATIONS AS ASSIGNED

- FINAL EXAM DUE ON SAKAI ON DECEMBER 15, 2017