

Plan 622 / UPA 682 – Urban Design (Lecture and Studio) – Spring 2021

Class location: Urban Design Studio (1600 Rowan Street)

Instructor: Julia Williams, AICP
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Class time: Monday evenings, 5:30 p.m. to 8:15 p.m.

Special Dates: First Session: January 10th
Last Day to Drop (100% Tuition) January 14th
Last Day to Withdraw March 9th
Spring Break: March 14-20 (no class on March 14th)
MLK Jr Holiday (no class): January 17th
Last Class Meeting: April 25th

Office hours: By appointment: directly before or after regular class meeting works best

PURPOSE The introduction of skills, practices and values fundamental to the successful and thoughtful experience, analysis and practice of urban design. Upon completion of this course the student will have a broad overview of the intentions necessary to the design of new cities and the analytical skills required to devise contextually appropriate infill strategies for existing city opportunities. As a Studio course we will have the chance to explore our own environment as a means of understanding the basic elements of every city's fabric. The creation of conceptual plans/sketches will give us the chance to put theory into practice and to develop an introductory level skill set of sketching, drawing and rendering.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Each assignment will be given a points value. There are 1000 points available and your grade will be determined by how many points you achieve. All projects, assignments, etc. are to be submitted and/or reviewed on the due dates as assigned. If you miss class due to an "excused" absence (see below) submit any assignment due on the date of your absence at the following normal class meeting.

The nature of studio classes, wherein readings are assigned and discussed, papers/questions are sometimes written, and studio course work, whose quality and evaluation is determined via a combination of objective and subjective criteria, leads to the grading of student work. Subjective evaluation of a student's participation in class discussions and group work, evidence of completing reading assignments, improvement throughout the semester in areas of graphic skills and design thinking, etc. are all weighed collectively during the final course grade assignments.

Two (2) unexcused absences will result in a one-letter-grade lowering of your final course grade. Four (4) unexcused absences will result in a two-letter grade lowering of your final course grade and a strong recommendation that withdrawing from the course be seriously considered.

Class Participation and Presentations (30%) 300 points

Students are expected to arrive at class having read any assigned material, finished the required assignments and ready to participate in discussions with salient comments, questions and observations. Consistently being tardy to class will result in a loss of overall points. Excused absences from class are appropriate for medical emergencies, family emergencies and 'on-the-edge-of-death' illnesses only. 0 points will be given for unexcused absences. Absences deprive you of valuable learning from the discussions of readings, lectures, and the exchange of ideas with me and your class mates. It also deprives me, your classmates, and/or project teammates of your contributions.

Almost every assignment will in some form be presented to the class. Students will be graded on their demeanor, professionalism, presentation skills, preparedness, etc. The presentation score is separate from the overall project score.

Graphic and Short Writing Assignments (40%) 400 points

Throughout the semester there may be a series of short writing assignments which will ask students to thoughtfully review a series of readings with respect to a particular point of view or topic. Other assignments may be centered on synthesizing content of readings and site exploration exercises into analytical responses to particular Urban Design issues or theories as they relate to specific places.

Studio Projects (30%) 300 points

Possible studio assignments could include site observations and recordings throughout Metro Louisville's urban core, a "Great Street Before-and-After" project, a small-site urban infill project, an "Ideal Town" design project, and/or the conceptual design of a new urban public space.

MISCELLANEOUS

- CELL PHONES: Please turn off cell phones once class begins.

Supplies (Art related supplies will be used for different projects throughout the semester, these can be purchased for relatively low cost):

- Engineer's Scale (This should be bought and brought to all classes) 1"=10', 1"=20', 1"=30', 1"=40' etc.
- Pencils
- Sharpies – black, Ultra Fine and Fine point
- Paper (unlined, copy paper is fine)

For the majority of the course we will be using **SketchUp**. You will need to have a laptop with **SketchUp** downloaded by the 5th week. The 2021 student version of **SketchUp** is around \$55 and is valid for 1 year. There is a "free" download that lasts for 30 days. This version does not have everything you will need for the course.

Only the basics of SketchUp will be taught. It is recommended that you have a mouse to use with SketchUp, it helps with accuracy.

COURSE READING

Recommended texts:

Articles may be selected/reprinted/distributed from various sources throughout the semester. Most if not all will be posted on Blackboard.

COVID19: Please wear a mask.

COURSE OUTLINE (subject to change)

Week 1: Introduction.

The first class will include a preview of the course and class expectations.

Week 2: *Sketch Up* tutorial and assignment

Studio work will include instruction and exercises regarding the *Sketch Up* program.

Week 3: Urbanizing Suburbia

The class will look at examples of urban and suburban forms at the site, street, district, neighborhood, town, city, metropolis, and regional scales. Design at all the various scales will be explored.

Week 4: City “blocks” and City walk.

The class will be walking around the downtown and recording the urban environment. Upon returning to the studio the students will manipulate blocks to explore urban form vs. building form, spatial definition, place-making principles and urban design fundamentals.

Week 5: Pattern of the City

This class will focus on connectivity (roads, sidewalks, trails or other links that connect people to places) in urban design. This week we will explore the networks within the built environment and the considerations for urban design as they relate to both vehicles and pedestrians including access barriers, walkability, pedestrian comfort, traffic, and parking.

Week 6: Creating a Sense of Place

This week will focus on what elements are involved in creating a sense of place and what places mean. **Video (bring a snack)**

Week 7: Uncovering Hidden Spaces

The class will discuss how to use urban design to take a forgotten space and make it unforgettable.

Week 8: Introduce Studio Final Project

The class will be partnering with a neighborhood and will be focusing on a neighborhood project to apply Urban Design principals. An introduction to how plans are developed and presented, from goals and objectives to programming, from initial sketches to final products will be discussed.

Week 9: Complete Streets

The class will be learning about what is included in a “complete street” and what it means for communities.

Week 10: Site Analysis/ PARK (Preserve, Add, Remove, Keep Out)

A thorough inventory and analysis of the final project site will help lead to an understanding of its strengths and weaknesses, opportunities and constraints, and finally, its definition. Based on the inventory and analysis, the class will focus on PARK objectives. This is a step toward understanding the design process, and the pieces that will eventually define a design solution.

Week 11: Work Day

This week the class will work in studio on the final project. Class will be using building materials to model their initial design concepts.

Week 12: Land Use and its effect on design

This week we will review different types of plans and regulations that affect urban design in communities (Comprehensive Plans, Master Plans, PUD’s, Zoning, Form Based Codes, and Design and Development Guidelines and Codes). We will also discuss programs and strategies used by both public and private sectors (e.g. LEED-ND, governmental initiatives, charrettes), and the objectives that these are striving to achieve through urban design.

Week 13: Current Urban Design Issues and trends

Tactical urbanism, sustainability, technology, infrastructure, housing etc. **(wear clothes you can get dirty or stained!)**

Week 14: Final Presentation