

# Seminar: Foundations of Urban Design

34:970:674:01 / Fall 2012 / 9:50-12:30 Mondays / Edward J. Bloustein School of Planning and Public Policy, Rutgers

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*“Under the seeming disorder of the old city, wherever the old city is working successfully, is a marvelous order for maintaining the safety of the streets and the freedom of the city. It is a complex order. Its essence is intricacy of sidewalk use, bringing with it a constant succession of eyes. This order is all composed of movement and change, and although it is life, not art, we may fancifully call it the art form of the city and liken it to the dance – not to a simple-minded precision dance with everyone kicking up at the same time, twirling in unison and bowing off en masse, but to an intricate ballet in which the individual dancers and ensembles all have distinctive parts which miraculously reinforce each other and compose an orderly whole. The ballet of the good city sidewalk never repeats itself from place to place, and in any once place is always replete with new improvisations.”*

— [Jane Jacobs, The Death and Life of Great American Cities](#)

## Description:

The foundation of urban design starts with the basic dimension of the building, how it sits on the lot, and how this building is able to shape the street and urban space. Attention to details is vital as they will define the quality and the sense of place.

This course is organized as a seminar facilitating information exchange and discussions. This seminar will focus on the *thought*, *principles* and *places* that have shaped the theory and practice of urban design and physical planning. Case studies will illustrate how towns, suburbs and cities are shaped by both bold stroke planning/design interventions and incremental evolutions. The seminar will highlight fundamentals of the neighborhoods, the block and the building.

## Instructional Objectives:

1. The theory: urban design lines or tendencies.
2. Urban Design Concepts
3. Scales: from town, neighborhood, street to lot and building
4. Urban Elements: their configuration and dimensions
5. Building typologies
6. Evolution and transformation

## Learning Objectives:

Student will be able to identify design aspects of physical planning, suggest ways to resolve multi-dimensional problems in different contexts and scales. Student will be able to explain the thought process (criteria) - emphasizing the discussion.

## Assignments and Exams:

The final grade will be based on Assignments and extra credit may be given based on individual contribution to in-class discussions. The Assignments will involve written essays and graphics with captions that illustrate points made in the written essay. Assignments will involve basic graphic skills in preparing diagrams, measuring and hand drawing street sections, public spaces and a basic block plan. An engineering scale will be necessary, but no prior design or graphic skills are required for these assignments. A small roll or sheets of tracing paper, graph paper, black markers and a camera are necessary.

Assignments will be graded on a scale of up to 100 points as follows:

- 50 points for understanding of principles
- 50 points for the selection and/or creation and captioning of images to illustrate principles

All assignments are due as posted. Late assignments will be reduced 50%. Assignments may be re-submitted for additional credit at the discretion of the instructor.

This class will adhere to the Rutgers University policy on academic integrity which can be found

at: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/>

## Absenteeism

Students are expected to attend all classes and field trips. In the event that a student is unable to attend a class for any reason, it is expected that the student will notify the instructor by email prior to that class.

## Reading Materials:

- Steuteville, Robert. *New Urbanism: Best Practices Guide*. Ithaca, NY: New Urban News Publications, 2009. Print. [www.mewurbannews.com](http://www.mewurbannews.com)
- Busquets, Joan, and Felipe Correa. *Cities X Lines*. [Cambridge, Mass.]: Graduate School of Design, Harvard University, 2006. Print.
- Kostof, Spiro. *The City Assembled: The Elements of Urban Form through History*. Boston: Little, Brown, 1992. Print.
- Hall, Peter. *Cities in Civilization*. New York: Pantheon, 1998. Print.
- Duany, Andres, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, and Jeff Speck. *Suburban Nation: The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream*. New York: North Point, 2000. Print.
- Gindroz, Ray, David Lewis, Karen Levine, and Donald Kaliszewski. *The Urban Design Handbook: Techniques and Working Methods*. New York [NY] [etc.]: W. W. Norton, 2003. Print.

- Dobbins, Michael. *Urban Design and People*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2009. Print.
- Arnold, Dana. *Rural Urbanism: London Landscapes in the Early Nineteenth Century*. Manchester: Manchester UP, 2005. Print

The following additional reading should be downloaded and printed:

- Leccese, Michael, and Kathleen McCormick. *Charter of the New Urbanism*. New York: McGraw Hill, 2000. Print. [http://www.cnu.org/sites/files/charter\\_english.pdf](http://www.cnu.org/sites/files/charter_english.pdf)
- Robert Davis, Andres Duany, and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk. *The Lexicon of the New Urbanism*. Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, 2002. Print. <http://www.dpz.com/pdf/LEXICON.PDF>

Other reading materials and videos will be assigned during the semester.

## **Course Calendar:** Subject to Change

09/10/12	<b>Session 1: Introduction and Overview</b>
09/17/12	<b>Session 2: Different Design Lines / Traditional Urbanism vs. Conventional Suburban Development</b>
09/24/12	<b>Session 3: The Region, Metropolis, City and Town</b>
10/01/12	<b>Session 4: Field Trip to Forest Hills, Queens New York.</b>
10/08/12	<b>Session 5: Quiz / The Town, The neighborhood and District &amp; The Corridor.</b>
10/15/12	<b>Session 6: The Street and the Block</b>
10/22/12	<b>Session 7: Field Trip to Radburn, New Jersey</b>
10/29/12	<b>Session 8: The Street and the Block</b>
11/05/12	<b>Session 9: Quiz / The Lot and the Building (commercial)</b>
11/12/12	<b>Session 10: The Lot and the Building (residential)</b>
11/19/12	<b>Session 11: Quiz / Building Types and Architecture</b>
11/26/12	<b>No Class</b>
12/03/12	<b>Session 12: Group Discussion, Design Exercise</b>
12/10/12	<b>Session 13: Final Exam / Presentation</b>