

Sustainable Urbanism

Fall, 2011

School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning
School of Sustainability
Arizona State University

PUP 465 (82594)/565 (87629)
SOS 465 (87704)

COORLI-74

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Monday and Wednesdays, 5:00 to 6:15 PM

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Course Description

This course will examine the history, theory and practice of “sustainable urbanism”, defined by the urban reform movements known variously as New Urbanism, Good Urbanism, Smart Growth, or Walkable/Liveable Cities. These reform movements seek to promote walkable, diverse, compact, sustainable human settlements.

These reform ideas, which have been brewing since the 19th century but came of age toward the end of the 20th century, are particularly interesting to study because they attempt so much: diversity within a system of order, control that allows freedom, an appreciation of complexity that can coexist with civic prominence, a comprehensive perspective that does not ignore detail. There is much to admire and much to critique.

Through a combination of readings and lectures, this course will examine all sides of Sustainable Urbanism. We will look at the historical, theoretical and empirical justifications, debating the good and the not-so-good. We will try to understand where Sustainable Urbanism is succeeding, and where it is failing (and how success and failure can be defined). We will try to discover the difference between ideal and actuality, and discuss what that means for the long-term viability of sustainable urban form.

Goals of Course

- To introduce students to the history, theory, and design principles of Sustainable Urbanism.
- To gain a comprehensive understanding of what Sustainable Urbanists are trying to do and why, and the reasons behind the apparent successes and failures.
- To further students' ability to think and speak critically and intelligently about Sustainable Urbanism.

Readings

This is a reading and lecture-based course. *Please plan on reading approximately 80 pages per week.* Students will be expected to have read the assigned selections prior to each class period (per attached schedule).

There are four required texts:

Duany, Andres, Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk and Jeff Speck. 2011. *Suburban Nation (10th Anniversary Edition): The Rise of Sprawl and the Decline of the American Dream.* North Point Press.

Jacobs, Jane. 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities.* New York: Vintage.

Kunstler, James Howard. 1996. *Home From Nowhere.* New York: Simon & Schuster.

Talen, Emily. 2005. *New Urbanism and American Planning: The Conflict of Cultures.* London: Routledge.

Course Requirements

A. Papers

Two literature review papers are required. These papers should incorporate a minimum of 5 references that are **full-length articles published in scholarly journals**. The point of the papers is to pick a topic or debate to explore in more depth, and present the evidence that either 1) supports a particular argument; or 2) contrasts two competing points of view.

Your literature review paper should show that you've read and fully absorbed the readings, and that you've understood the main arguments. Start by addressing: What is the main theoretical or empirical argument? Are there competing explanations being refuted? What empirical evidence is given to support an argument? What is the theoretical/analytical reasoning being used?

Each paper will be worth 15% of your grade. Late papers will be assessed a 5 point penalty (out of 50 points) for each day late. For undergrads, papers should be 6-8 pages – double-spaced, 12 pt. font. For grad students: each paper should be 10-12 pages.

Criteria for grading: well-written, well-structured, clearly presented argument, appropriate sources, evidence of having read and thought about the articles, convincing synthesis of literature.

B. Exams

There will be 2 midterm exams and 1 final exam. The midterms will be relatively straightforward identification of concepts, places, events and main ideas from the lectures and readings. The final will be cumulative.

C. Spot Quizzes

There will be random quizzes throughout the semester. The purpose of these is to increase student motivation for a) doing the readings, and b) attending class.

Grading

- 30% papers (2 @ %15 each)
- 15% midterm exam #1
- 15% midterm exam #2
- 15% spot quizzes
- 25% final exam

Grading Scale:

A, 90-100; B, 80-89; C, 70-79; D, 60-69

Integrity Policy:

The ASU [student academic integrity policy](http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity) lists violations in detail. These violations fall into five broad areas that include but are not limited to: cheating on an academic evaluation or assignment, plagiarizing, academic deceit, such as fabricating data or information, aiding academic integrity policy violations and inappropriately collaborating, or falsifying academic records. For more information about the ASU student academic integrity policy, please use the following web link <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>

Disability Accommodations:

Qualified students with disabilities who will require disability accommodations in this class are encouraged to make their requests to me at the beginning of the semester either during office hours or by appointment. **Note:** Prior to receiving disability accommodations, verification of eligibility from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is required. Disability information is confidential.

SCHEDULE

August 22: course introduction

Aug. 24-31: The problem: sprawl, disinvestment and placeless cities

Reading assignments:

Aug 24: Home from Nowhere, Prologue & Chaps 1-3

Aug 29: Suburban Nation, Chaps 1-3

Aug 31: New Urbanism and American Planning, Chap 1
Death and Life, Chaps 1-2

Sept 7-14: Urbanism: Origins and Recurrent Themes

Reading assignments:

Sept 7: Death and Life, Chap 3

Sept 12: Death and Life, Chaps 4-5

Sept 14: Death and Life, Chaps 6-7 (film)

Sept 19-26: Basic principles

Reading assignments:

Sept 19: New Urbanism and American Planning, Chap 3

Home from Nowhere, Chap 4

Sept 21: Suburban Nation, Chaps 4-5

Sept 26: Death and Life, Chaps 8-9

Sept 28: no assignment (midterm)

**Sept 28: Midterm I

Oct 3-10: Increments, processes, rules and codes

Reading assignments:

Oct 3: New Urbanism and American Planning, Chap 4

Oct 5: Death and Life, Chaps 10-12

Oct 10: no assignment (paper due)

**Oct 10: Paper I due

Oct 12-19: Big ideas: from City Beautiful to Urban Renewal

Reading assignments:

- Oct 12: New Urbanism and American Planning, Chap 5
- Oct. 17: Suburban Nation, Chaps 6-7
Home from Nowhere, Chap 5
- Oct 19: Death and Life, Chaps 13-14 (film)

Oct 24-Nov 2: Planned communities and neighborhood units

Reading assignments:

- Oct 24: New Urbanism and American Planning, Chap 6
- Oct 26: Home from Nowhere, Chap. 6
- Oct 31: Death and Life, Chaps 15-16
Suburban Nation, Chap 8
- Nov. 2: no assignment (midterm)

**Nov 7: midterm 2

Nov 9-30: Regionalism, environmentalism, the transect

Reading assignments:

- Nov. 9: New Urbanism and American Planning, Chap 7
- Nov. 14: Home from Nowhere, Chaps 8-9
- Nov. 16: Death and Life, Chaps 17-18
- Nov. 30: no assignment (paper)

**Nov 30: paper 2 due

Nov 21-Dec 5: Affordability, equity, and other essential topics

Reading assignments:

- Nov 21: Home from Nowhere, Chaps 10-12 (film)
- Nov 23: Suburban Nation, Chap 9 (film)
- Nov. 28: Suburban Nation, Chaps 10-11
- Nov. 30: Death and Life, Chaps 19-20
- Dec 5: Death and Life, Chaps 21-22

**Final: Monday, Dec 12 4:50 - 6:40 PM