"Theory without practice has no value
Practice without theory has no purpose...
...and either without responsibility
has no place in architecture."¹

Course Description

Overview
Cities are where strangers live together. They are the accumulation of networked and interrelated processes resulting from spatial proximity, conflict, and varying attempts to meet the needs – biological, cultural, intellectual, logistical, and emotional – of groups and individuals. Cities are more than densely populated places, characterized by more than a simple concentration of building. By their very definition, cities are social and the most complex, complicated, and contested, of our spaces.

At its core this course is about translation, navigation, and mediation—between philosophies of the city and the city as constructed, between theory and practice, between ethic and action. Situated between these, we will examine and discuss the roles of architecture, architects, and design more generally within the sociopolitical complexity of cities.

Urban intervention happens in the spaces within buildings, the spaces of buildings, and the spaces between buildings. Interventions occur within the sometimes sweeping and sometimes surgical scales of infrastructure, megaprojects, urban planning, community action, infill development, and legislated policy, all in attempts to shape the dynamic forces moving through the city. They occur at scales ranging from the regional through the urban to that of singular buildings and of individual human actors.

The temporal scales of intervention – in practice and in theory – are similarly varied. They are also nonlinear. Consider: To study the city is to study a complex and spatial system whose only constant may be its ceaseless change. An understanding of urbanity or the urban condition is not a goal, but a process. To inhabit the city is to occupy a place only to the extent that you may occupy a moment, contributing in that moment to the reification or disruption of the city as constructed. And yet paradoxically surrounding you stands the concretized manifestation of urban history, a history that is often less representative of formal thought but of political priorities, social needs, cultural norms, and the negotiations between them. To act on the city, then, is to attempt to engage both its dynamism and its concretized history. Urban action is both spatial and temporal in its attempt to steer the organization of development. Cities, so long as they are occupied, are never finished.

Thus, the history presented and examined here is not one that can be adequately traced with strict adherence to chronology. Instead, this course will examine works of urban architecture through the evaluative framework inherent to the expression of the discipline, inherent in architectural praxis itself – namely, a framework of spatiotemporality, at times privileging geography over history, spatiality over historicism, and space over time.

As a result, this course is organized as a survey of topics in social philosophy and urban development, offering a broad-stroke depiction of the theoretical landscape within urban thinking and city making. The course begins with a premise that there is no urban action without

¹ Wilkins 2007, xii.
politics, no practice without opinion, and no design without agenda. Thus, while individual topics can receive little more than a week’s attention within the semester, each will be discussed via analytical comparison between the writing of social thinkers and the propositions of architects and urban designers.

**Method of Instruction**

The course is divided into three thematic modules (plus an epilogue of sorts), into which the thirteen topics surveyed in the lectures and readings are grouped. Readings predominantly consist of theoretical writings; lectures consist of a series of architectural projects and proposals which engage those theories. Through the relationship between theory (in text, in the reading) and practice (in projects, in the lecture), the course will analyze the relevance and impact of social considerations on the built environment and the development of architecture as a critical discipline. Often the architectural case studies will be used to help unpack and contextualize the on-the-ground implications of the selected theories.

Given the course’s learning objectives (below), a significant component of the method of instruction is embedded in the specific design of the assignments given. The course is fundamentally about the intersections between the thirteen topics covered (rather than about the topics individually). Thus, the writing assignments are designed with care and with specific attention to intersectionality. As such, class time will be reserved for working through the framing of these papers as students explore options and opportunities for analysis.

**Student Learning Objectives**

Among others, the course objectives include the ability to translate (bidirectionally) between works of theory and urban and architectural propositions. More specifically, upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to

- Understand and critically interpret the central social themes present in western urbanism and architectural proposition since the mid-19th Century as well as several historical and nonwestern precedents contributing to the development of the projects studied.
- Understand the development of architecture as a discipline, with particular focus on its development adjacent to related disciplines and sociopolitical processes as well as the historical relationship between the development of architectural and social theory.
- Demonstrate a facility with transdisciplinary analysis and inquiry, incorporating literature (both primary and secondary texts) across disciplines in the study of architecture and architectural processes.
- Develop a critical approach to the analysis of architectural projects, one which situates design proposals within and upon a physical site and a social context.
- Develop basic elements of historical and geographic research: including the formulation of research questions, the use of textual and visual evidence, and the development of analytical relationships of processes spanning both time and space.

**Standard Information**

The class will meet twice weekly on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:10PM to 5:25PM, save for exceptions described in the academic calendar and noted in the Course Schedule below. Barring any technical difficulties, class will begin promptly.

**Device Policy**

Generally speaking the classroom policy on ‘devices’ is as follows: (1) Students may use laptops, tablets, etc to access readings and notes. (2) Students may use those devices and others for other reasons very minimally, so long as they do not become a distraction or an in-class habit. (3) Non-class-related on-screen content is not allowed. So, by way of example, this means that the absolute only way to make Twitter okay by this policy is to be tweeting about class (hashtagged and mentioned accordingly, of course). (4) I reserve the right to call out deviations from and abuses of this policy.

**Evaluation & Grading**

**Reading & Participation**

Students are expected to keep up with the syllabus schedule, completing readings prior to class, and arriving prepared for the lectures which build upon the required reading. Further, while the syllabus divides the readings into specific topics and despite this structure explicitly avoiding strict chronology, the course is designed as a cumulative sequence. Concepts and
ideas discussed in the early weeks will reappear, and certain topics cannot be meaningfully discussed without prior groundwork laid in others. As a result, again, students are expected to keep pace with the syllabus reading schedule. (After all, what use is a discussion on the architectural implications of technology without having first discussed urban organization around modes of production?)

While the course is largely formatted as a lecture, class discussion proper will also be a frequent expectation. (Students should know and anticipate that I will ask a lot of questions during lecture.) As such, class participation will comprise 10% of the final grade.

As a portion of the participation grade, each student will be required to contribute a minimum of one architectural project as a discussion starter. Students may elect to contribute more than one, if they choose. A sign-up sheet for topics and expectations for the contribution will be circulated in class on Thursday, 29 January.

**Response Papers**

Students will be required to write a total of three papers through the semester. The first two, due before the midterm, are designed as synthetic response papers while the final paper is a larger research paper with interim deliverables to focus students’ questions and inquiries.

**Paper 1** is a short paper that asks students to synthesize the topics covered in Part 1 of the course. The assignment description will include an essay prompt to which students are expected to respond with support from the readings and examples from the architectural precedents discussed in lecture. **Paper 1 will comprise 20% of the final grade.**

Like the first, **Paper 2** is a short synthetic paper covering the first half of Part 2. Again, students will be given an essay prompt within the assignment description. **Paper 2 will comprise 20% of the final grade.**

**Final Research Paper**

The Final Paper is a more substantial analytical research paper on a topic determined by each student. The topic should be an analysis of an urban architectural project (whether a proposal, proposition, or realized building) and its sociocultural underpinnings. It is expected to include the theoretical perspectives or framework(s) discussed in class, from beyond the specific discipline of architectural theory. The Final Paper requires two interim deliverables prior to the submission of the paper:

Students will submit a **Topic Proposal**, which is expected to be a brief summary description of the intended architectural case study along with preliminary research questions and considerations for the analysis. The proposal is an opportunity to seek feedback and guidance toward bibliographic resources, research directions, and analytical framing. Students will be required to have their proposals approved prior to moving forward with their topics, and are encouraged to meet me during office hours to discuss possible topics prior to the proposal due date. Specific requirements for the proposals will be included in the Final Paper assignment description. **The Topic Proposal will comprise 10% of the final grade.**

An **Annotated Bibliography** is required prior to the final paper being submitted. Specific requirements for this deliverable will be included in the Final Paper assignment description. At a minimum, students should be able at this point to articulate their papers’ theses and critically describe the relevance of the texts and projects to be cited. **The Annotated Bibliography will comprise 15% of the final grade.**

The specific requirements and expectations for the **Final Paper** itself will be delineated in the assignment description. Generally, students will be expected to engage primary and secondary sources, both graphic and textual, from architectural and nonarchitectural perspectives, in order to critically and thoughtfully analyze a work of urban architecture through the lens of social theory and evaluate the intention and efficacy of the work relative to its social context. **The Final Paper will comprise the remaining 25% of the final grade.**

**Attendance**

With a particular mind to the division of course material presented in readings versus in lecture, students are expected to attend every class meeting. Attendance records will be maintained...
throughout the semester (via sign-in sheets). Students with excessive absences (greater than 2) without appropriate reason, will see a reduction in their final grades in increments of one-third of a letter grade (A- to B+) beginning with the third absence.

Students who will miss class due to religious holidays or other appropriate reason should email the professor in the first week of classes with the dates (and reasons) of their foreseen absences and are encouraged to make arrangements with peers for lecture notes.

Submission
Each assignment description will outline the specific requirements for its submission format, deadline, and deliverable expectations.

Save for extenuating circumstances for which extensions will be given only with prior approval and compelling reasons, absolutely no late assignments will be accepted without a late penalty. As a deterrent to late submissions, the late penalty is a reduction of 50% of the total points within the first 24 hours after the deadline and an additional 25% of the total possible points up to 48 hours after the deadline.

Grading
Assignments will be graded on a four-point letter-grade scale, from which final grades will be calculated according to the percentages listed above. Any students holding a grade of less than B- following the University’s Spring Recess will be notified, and a meeting will be scheduled to discuss expectations for the latter half of the semester.

Expectation of Academic Honesty
As always and as with every other course, this class is conducted in accordance with University policy on matters of academic honesty and integrity and with attention to the College’s Honor Code. Note that instances of plagiarism will not be tolerated – whether in written text, in research, or in intellectual framing – and will result in an automatic failure in the course. We build on the work of others: give credit where credit is due.

Additionally, this course contains a few considerations which should be stated. At several points in the course, students will be encouraged to look to their peers for collaborative discussion and debate. (With particular relevance to the topics explored in this course, the collective culture created by shared studio spaces is certainly expected to affect and augment studying practices beyond design classes.) Except where otherwise stated in specific assignments, collaboration is welcomed but individual assignments must be conceived and completed individually.

Students with Disabilities
Students with disabilities who will be taking this course and may need disability-related accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment with me as soon as possible. Disabled students who need test or classroom accommodations must be registered in advance with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) in 105 Hewitt.

Resources & Materials

Readings
There are no required book purchases associated with this course. Readings that are not available electronically as open sources or through the Libraries will be distributed as PDFs via Courseworks. That said, many readings are collected from anthology readers which contain several worthwhile texts and are recommended purchases. In particular, students may find The City Reader (edited by LeGates and Stout) and Readings in Urban Theory (edited by Fainstein and Campbell) worthwhile.

Lecture Images
Image lists including bibliographic citations of architectural projects described and images used in lecture will be available for students at the beginning of class.

Office Hours & Meetings
I will hold office hours weekly for students of this course in the Diana Center, 503B on Wednesdays from 1PM to 3PM. Note that these are office hours set aside specifically for this class and not “open” office hours. Individual meetings can be arranged for times outside of office hours by appointment.
Course Schedule

Notes  [CW] Reading is available as a PDF on Courseworks.
      [LIB] Reading is available online via the University Libraries.

Part 1 | Premises

THE CITY

CLASS NOTES:
Course Overview, Review of the Syllabus, and Expectations on Tuesday, 20 January.
Readings are required for Thursday, 22 January. (This week only. Readings for all weeks following are to be completed for Tuesdays.)

REQUIRED:
The City Reader. [LIB]

Urban Sociology Reader [LIB]

RECOMMENDED
The City Reader [LIB]

POLIS

POLITICAL

CLASS NOTES:
Paper 1 assigned on Tuesday, 27 January.
Sign-up sheet for Projects for Discussion circulated on Thursday, 29 January.

REQUIRED:
Arendt. The Human Condition. [CW]
   - Chapter 2 “The Public and the Private Realm.” 22-78.

Frampton. Labour, Work, and Architecture. [CW]

RECOMMENDED:
Arendt. The Human Condition. [CW]
   - Chapter 1 “The Human Condition,” 7-21.

SOCIAL

SPACE

CLASS NOTES:
Paper 1 topics workshopped in class on Thursday, 5 February.

REQUIRED:
Lefebvre. The Production of Space. [CW]

RECOMMENDED:
Harvey. Social Justice and the City [LIB]
   - Chapter 1 “Social Processes and Spatial Form: The Conceptual Problems of Urban
Planning,” 22-49. In particular, the section entitled “Towards a Philosophy of Social Space.”


Lefebvre. The Production of Space. [CW]

Stanek. Henri Lefebvre on Space. [LIB]

**Part 2 | Praxis in Context: Social Questions of Scale & Externality**

**HOUSING**

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Week 4**

**10-12 Feb**

Paper 1 due at the beginning of class on Monday, 17 February.

**CLASS NOTES:**

Paper 2 assigned Wednesday, 19 February.

**REQUIRED:**

Lane. Housing and Dwelling. [CW]

Rethinking Architecture. [CW]


**RECOMMENDED:**

Braver. Reader’s Guides: Heidegger’s Later Writings. [LIB]
   o “Building Dwelling Thinking” in Part 3: Reading the Text, 95-106. (For elaboration on Heidegger’s “Building Dwelling Thinking”.)


The City Reader [LIB]

**PRODUCTION & ECONOMY**

**REQUIRED:**

The City Reader [LIB]
Urban Sociology Reader. [LIB]

RECOMMENDED
The City Reader [LIB]

Readings in Urban Theory [CW]

TECHNOLOGY
Week 6
24-26 Feb
REQUIRED:
The City Reader [LIB]

Stassen. Philosophical and Political Writings, Volume 76: Martin Heidegger. [LIB]

RECOMMENDED:
Braver. Reader’s Guides: Heidegger’s Later Writings. [LIB]
  o “The Question Concerning Technology” in Part 3: Reading the Text, 82-97. (For perhaps more accessible elaboration on Heidegger’s “The Question Concerning Technology” than Elden’s listed below.)

Elden. Mapping the Present. [LIB]
  o “The Question of Technology” in Chapter 3: Art, Technology, Place and the Political, 75-81. (For elaboration on Heidegger’s “The Question Concerning Technology.”)


ENVIRONMENT
Week 7
3-5 Mar
CLASS NOTES:
Paper 2 workshopped in class on Thursday, 5 March.

REQUIRED:
Urban Sociology Reader. [LIB]

Frampton. Labour, Work, and Architecture. [CW]
RECOMMENDED:

SECURITY
ASSIGNMENTS:
Week 8
10-12 Mar
Paper 2 due at the beginning of class on Tuesday, 10 March.

CLASS NOTES:
Final Paper assigned on Thursday, 12 March.

REQUIRED:
Foucault. *Power/Knowledge* [CW]

*Rethinking Architecture*. [CW]

The *City Reader* [LIB]

RECOMMENDED:
Elden. *Mapping the Present* [LIB]

Foucault. *Power/Knowledge* [CW]

Week 9
17-19 Mar
NO CLASS:
Spring Recess

PROCESSES
CLASS NOTES:
Week 10
24-26 Mar
Topic Proposals workshopped in class on Tuesday, 24 March.

ASSIGNMENTS:
Topic Proposals due at the beginning of class on Thursday, 26 March.

REQUIRED:
Berman. *All that Is Solid Melts Into Air* [CW]

*Readings in Planning Theory* [CW]

The *City Reader* [LIB]

RECOMMENDED:
Berman. *All that Is Solid Melts Into Air* [CW]
Part IV, Chapter 2: “The 1860s: The New Man in the Street,” 212-248

Habermas. *Legitimation Crisis* [CW]

*Readings in Urban Theory* [CW]

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<td>Harvey. <em>Social Justice and the City</em> [LIB]</td>
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*Readings in Urban Theory* [CW]

(RECOMMENDED:
*Readings in Urban Theory* [CW]

*Urban Sociology Reader* [LIB]

Sassen, Saskia. 2001. [CW]

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<td>Week 12</td>
<td>Final Papers workshopped (with a focus on the annotated bibliography deliverable) in class on Thursday, 9 April.</td>
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<td>7-9 Apr</td>
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(REQUIRED:
*Readings in Urban Theory*. [CW]

*Urban Sociology Reader*. [LIB]

Mingione. *Urban Poverty and the Underclass*. [LIB]

Wilkins. *The Aesthetics of Equity*. [CW]
Chapter 1. “Space—Place.” 3-29

(RECOMMENDED:
Wilkins. *The Aesthetics of Equity*. [CW]
Chapter 4. “Space—Action.” 97-115

**GENDER**

**ASSIGNMENTS:**
Annotated Bibliography due at the beginning of class on Thursday, 16 April.

**REQUIRED:**
Readings in Planning Theory. [CW]

Urban Sociology Reader. [LIB]

RECOMMENDED:
*The City Reader*. [LIB]

*Cities and Gender*. [LIB]
- Chapter 3 “Trends in Urban Restructuring, Gender, and Feminist Theory.” 64-96
- Chapter 5 “Infrastructures of Daily Life” 127-156
- Chapter 10 “Cities and Gender-Politics in Practice” 283-296

Colomina. *Sexuality and Space*. [CW]

**Epilogue**

**JUSTICE, EQUITY, & THE PUBLIC**

**CLASS NOTES:**
Final Papers workshopped in class on Thursday, 23 April.

**REQUIRED:**
Fainstein. *The Just City*. [CW]


*The City Reader* [LIB]

RECOMMENDED:
Fainstein. *The Just City*.

*Readings in Urban Theory*. [CW]
NOTES ON UTOPIA
Week 15
28-30 Apr

ASSIGNMENTS:
Final Paper due at the beginning of class on Thursday, 30 April.

CLASS NOTES:
There are no reading requirements for the last week’s lecture. Spend the time with your papers.

References
(Full citations of references in the schedule above and a few extras.)