



Understanding cities, the largest and most complex artifacts in human history, is the core of urban design knowledge and is essential for the disciplines and practices of architecture, landscape architecture, and city and regional planning. The foundation of that knowledge – urban form and urban process – is also intertwined with other disciplines, including civil and environmental engineering, law, economics, geography, political science and many more. This course is taught from historical vantage points across the globe, recognizing that urban form is shaped by many influences – ecological, technological, cultural, political and economic.

Our framework for examining the form of cities, their histories and their present situations is morphological, that is, having to do with urban form and structure:

- How territory is organized into public and private domains – in some form of lots and blocks and streets – the most persistent part of urban form and the fundamental framework for urban sustainability as cities change over time.
- How the public domain – streets and public spaces and public buildings – are formed or designed for different purposes and as their situations change over time as settings for social, civic and political actions.
- How the private domains of buildings and gardens fit within larger cultural, technological and economic contexts and, with few exceptions, change more frequently than either the public domain or the form of lots and blocks and streets.
- This three-part urban structure sets the stage for the everyday lives of citizens and denizens enabling accessibility and mobility, or not, enabling diversity, or not, enabling ecological performance, or not, and enabling resiliency with changes over time, or not.

There are four learning objectives for the course:

- An ability to analyze a city or urban district to identify the primary ingredients of urban form and their changes over time. This will be demonstrated in a semester, either an essay or video, with a focus on a specific urban place.
- An ability to identify significant urban projects, people and ideas that inform our building, landscape, or urban design projects and also inform our broader cultural knowledge of cities across the world. This learning will be demonstrated with successful completion of weekly reading summaries and three short quizzes.
- An understanding of the many ways that political, cultural, technological and economic situations and policies have shaped and continue to shape urban form and process over time. This will be demonstrated with successful completion of the final examination.
- An understanding of urban sustainability as urban infrastructure with the ability to cite evidence from various cities and regions across the world. This will be demonstrated with brief research “poster” with images, bibliography and a maximum 500 word essay.

There are five requirements for the course.

- Attendance with penalties for more than three unexcused absences. Attendance will be checked periodically.
- 50% – Completion of readings and reading summaries on weekly basis, submitted on Canvas
- 10% – Brief take home quizzes as a way to reinforce learning.
- 10% – A brief research “poster” on sustainability issues in a specific city.
- 10% – An essay or video as a semester project.
- 10% – A take home final examination.

Grading will respond to student's background and academic program and whether undergraduate or graduate level.