

ARCH 6151/6352: THEORIES OF URBAN DESIGN/THEORY 2

Georgia Institute of Technology, College of Design

FALL 2018/TUESDAY 6-8:45pm

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This lecture and seminar course is required for MS. Urban Design students. It satisfies the Theory 2 requirement for M.Arch students. It is strongly recommended for M.Arch/MCRP dual degree students and MCRP urban design students, and open to all others, including latter-year BS.Arch students. Prior familiarity with architectural history is a plus and the course is not recommended for students in the first year of the 3 year M.Arch.

Organization

The course equips students with an understanding of the foundational ideas and strategies that we confront and debate in the practice of urban design and in the interface between buildings and cities. Bracketed by discussions of historical and contemporary theories and issues, the bulk of the course is organized around four perennial urban design themes. Each theme will be the focus for two weeks with lectures, assigned “classic” texts and class discussions. How do the different authors propose that territory should be organized? How do they treat public space vs private property? Program vs type? Site vs cultural context? Social vs formal concerns? In addition to the “classic” texts, other brief readings will support the primary text, criticize it, or bring it into the present. The four themes are:

Incremental and Empirical. The primary text will be Jane Jacobs’ *Death and Life of Great American Cities*. Additional readings and discussion will include ideas about self-organizing communities, everyday urbanism, pattern language, and others.

Typology and Morphology. The primary texts will be Aldo Rossi’s *Architecture of the City* and Rem Koolhaas’ *Delirious New York*. Additional readings and discussion will include the neorationalist city, urban morphology, and space syntax.

Context and Composition. The primary texts will be Colin Rowe’s *As I Was Saying: Urbanistics* and Rem Koolhaas’ *S,M,L,XL* urban essays. Additional readings and discussion will include the arguments for and against formalism, figures vs fields, contextualism vs “the modern project”, master planning vs tactical urbanism and big data vs parametric urbanism.

Ecology and Environment. The primary texts will be Ian McHarg’s *Design With Nature* and Peter Calthorpe’s *Urbanism in the Age of Climate Change*. Additional readings and discussions will include debates between new urbanism and landscape urbanism, and issues of ecocities, megacities, and megaslums.

Requirements

The principal work will be completing the reading, writing 1-page weekly reading summaries that prepare for participation in thoughtful in-class discussion. An 8-page final paper and powerpoint presentation to the class is required where students are to analyze one of the readings in depth and elaborate on how they expect its argument will influence their future work. Attendance in class is mandatory.

Evaluation Criteria

The final grade will be determined by the following measures:

40% on the completion and quality of weekly reading summaries

30% on final paper & presentation

30% on attendance and participation in class discussions