Spring 2024
Department of Urban and Regional Planning
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

UP426 Urban Design and Planning

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 AM – 12:20 PM
Location: 223 Temple Buell Hall

Instructor: Colleen Chiu-Shee, ccs32@illinois.edu
Office Hours: by appointment at TBH M224 or via Zoom

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Office Hours: by appointment or via Zoom

INTRODUCTION

UP426 (Spring 2024) is intended for undergraduate and graduate students in various planning and related fields who are seeking an introduction to fundamental knowledge of theory and praxis in the field of city design and development. This course adopts a dual-track structure, involving class activities that lie at the intersection of design and social studies. The goal is to sharpen students' design thinking and social understanding in tandem. The first half of the semester includes seven lectures about key ideas and practices that are relevant to pressing domestic and international challenges. These lectures—selective in nature—seek to provide snapshots of wicked urban issues and prompt students to begin considering questions critical to the understanding of city design and development. These questions include: What is urban design? What is the relationship of urban design to society? How have cities developed and how are cities being (re)designed and (re)developed locally and around the world? How to understand urban fabric and its transformation? What is the future of city design in this tumultuous era? How has technological advancement influenced urban life and how should design and policy practices respond? How to design and develop cities based on principles of equity, resilience, and sustainability? In parallel, students will carry out a semester-long research and design project situated in local contexts in Champaign-Urbana. Students will form teams to conduct site analysis and generate conceptual design, following which each student will develop focused designs according to individuals' interests. This student-led process is guided by instructors in a design studio setting. The projects serve as hands-on learning opportunities for students with diverse backgrounds and skills to explore their interests, define their strengths, and advance theoretical, analytical, and creative competencies necessary for city design-related research and practice. A separate document provides additional instructions on the project.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND COURSE EXPECTATIONS

The primary goal of this course is to enable students to experiment with city design-related ideas and practices. The design-centered exercises emphasize skills of critical thinking, creative problem-solving, and storytelling. The semester-long project aims to enable students to utilize their oral, written, and visual communication skills to present analyses of existing conditions and construct compelling visions for future changes. The project unfolds in three phases:

Phase 1. Site Analysis. Students are first expected to collaboratively conduct site analysis, using data collected through mini fieldwork and online/archival research. Each group of students will utilize hand drawings and/or digital means (e.g., mapping, diagramming, and video recording) to synthesize their insights, evaluate the built environment and how it serves public life, and present their findings to the class. During this process, individual students are encouraged to identify more focused areas of interest, which will guide the subsequent exercises.

Phase 2. Concept Development. Each group of students will define their areas of design interventions (e.g., a single continuous area or multiple interconnected sites) and envision future transformations. Students will also propose strategies for achieving their visions, which may involve one or more dimensions of physical/spatial, social, and policy interventions. Logistically, each group should consider individual member's skills and collectively generate a plan that outlines the drawings and writings to produce and how group members can work in concert. Each group will present their concept development to the class and receive feedback from the instructors and peers.

Phase 3. Design Development. Each group member will develop a focused design of one component of the group project in support of the group's overarching vision. At the end of the semester, each group will compile the work from all members and all phases into a coherent story and share their project through a final presentation. After the final presentations, each group will submit a portfolio. Students should work with the instructors to determine the numbers and types of drawings and the amount of writing according to the nature of the proposed project. For final submissions, each group should submit the following files: an optimized and legible PDF of the portfolio, the InDesign package of the portfolio, AND the original files of the key drawings. Each group should consolidate these files into a Box folder and email a downloadable link of the folder to the instructors. Students should use the following format to name each file: UP426_SP24_File Title_Contributor's Last Name(s).

Group work: Collaboration and negotiation skills are valuable in many professional settings. Due to the complex nature of urban design issues, group work brings its advantages by enabling collective brainstorming, cross-pollination, and productivity sharing. Breaking down a class into small groups also foregrounds interpersonal communications and customized learning experiences. As each project, each student's interest, and each student's role in a group bear uniqueness, the instructors will survey student backgrounds at the beginning of the semester, pay close attention to individuals' contributions to group work, and assess individuals' learning based on their backgrounds. Students are welcome to have confidential conversations with the instructors should concerns about team dynamics arise. At the end of the semester, each student will fill out a peer assessment form, which will provide additional references for performance evaluation.

Participation: Students' active participation significantly contributes to the success of this course. Well-prepared desk crits will yield constructive feedback and ensure effective utilization of precious class time. This means preparing topics, questions, drawings, and other materials BEFORE each desk crit so that the instructors can understand where you are in project development and what help is relevant to you.

Software: This course focuses on design thinking as opposed to technical skill development, though the instructors will suggest tools to use and answer relevant questions. Students are strongly encouraged to be proactive and resourceful in developing software skills that align with their

aspirations. Please consider utilizing the great number of tutorials and troubleshooting posts on the internet.

Attendance: As stipulated in the Student Code, all students should maintain regular class attendance. In case of potential absence, please promptly notify the instructors and your groupmates. While poor attendance will not automatically result in a failing grade, it will be reflected in the participation component of your final grade. Please see page 6 for the policy on irregular attendance.

Syllabus, Announcements, and Canvas: The course syllabus, supplemental handouts, and announcements are great references for students to get organized, make plans, and address general questions about the schedule, assignment structure, grading rubric, submission instructions, and other logistics. If a student misses any information during class time, all documents and announcements are available on Canvas. Students are welcome to email the instructors to ask clarifying questions and make suggestions. However, repeated inquiries about already stated logistics could reflect a lack of accountability.

Grading: Grade determination is based on the following breakdown: class attendance (10%), site analysis (25%), concept development (25%), design development (40%).

GRADING RUBRIC

Grade	Criteria
A+|A|A-	The student demonstrates original and critical design thinking and the ability to integrate spatial and social considerations. Their site analysis creatively uses mapping and diagramming to present a thorough understanding of the studied area. The proposed design addresses important social, economic, and/or ecological-environmental issues that are crucial to future development. The ideas are well explained in presentations and final portfolios, which utilize analytical drawings, good graphics, and clear writing to make storytelling coherent and compelling. The work prioritizes quality over quantity. A succinct portfolio with thoughtful design, concise writing, and selective but high-quality drawings is better than a long, disorganized one. In general, the student is a resourceful learner and good communicator, able to facilitate productive conversations during desk crits and in group work and utilize various feedback to enhance their thinking and drawings.
B+|B|B-	The student shows sufficient effort to engage in desk crits and improve their design skills. They have carried out solid research, engaged in group work, completed all phases of the project, and presented satisfying results. However, the work demonstrates less evidence of critical thinking, originality, and/or creative solutions.
C+|C|C-	The student participates in classes and group work. However, their understanding of the study area is limited, and their design proposal lacks originality. Their graphic work demonstrates limited improvement over time despite receiving feedback from the instructors.
D+|D|D-	The student does not consistently attend the class, lacks input in desk crits and group work, and produces significantly less and/or lower-quality work than their peers. Their communication with the instructors is limited.
Fail F	The student shows little effort to keep up with the course, does not communicate their issues with the instructors, and does not finish the project.

GRADE	TOTAL PTS	GRADE	TOTAL PTS	GRADE	TOTAL PTS	GRADE	TOTAL PTS
A+	98 to 100	B	84 to 87.9	C-	71 to 73.9	F	<60
A	94 to 97.9	B-	81 to 83.9	D+	68 to 70.9		
A-	91 to 93.9	C+	78 to 80.9	D	64 to 67.9		
B+	88 to 90.9	C	74 to 77.9	D-	60 to 63.9		

TOOLS AND SOFTWARE

Students may find the following tools useful for desk crits: computer, pencil, ink pens, tracing paper, drafting tape, sketchbook, colored pencils, colored sketch markers, engineering scale, and architectural scale. Students can purchase tools online or in a physical store like Blackline Supply (809 S Fifth St Champaign, IL 61820).

Students are encouraged to use software for their projects, including ArcGIS Pro, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, Adobe InDesign, SketchUp, Rhinoceros, and AutoCAD. Though these computer programs are available for free on the lab computers in TBH, it can be helpful to install them on a personal computer. ArcGIS Pro and Adobe Creative Suite are available at the University of Illinois Webstore. SketchUp is available via a web version or can be downloaded by a student user at a significantly discounted price.

Students can also check out available software on DURP Remote server and AnyWare. The latter is a virtual desktop environment allowing students to access licensed software whether remote, on campus, or in class. FAA's IT services may provide technical support.

COURSE SCHEDULE

	Tuesdays		Thursdays		Tentative Project Schedule
Phase 1. Site Analysis	*Jan 16*	Course Introduction	*Jan 18*	Lecture: What is Urban Design?	Week 1. Meet your group
	Jan 23	Lecture: Champaign's Development History and Morphological Transformation Guest Speaker: Eric Van Buskirk, AICP	*Jan 25*	Lecture: Urban Design Ideas and Forces Shaping Urban Form	Week 2. Survey the site, gather information
	Jan 30	Lecture: Housing, Neighborhoods, and Equity	*Feb 1*	Lecture: Placemaking and City-Making	Week 3. Draft site analysis drawings, prepare for desk crits
	Feb 6	Desk Crits	*Feb 8*	Desk Crits	Week 4. Improve site analysis, prepare presentations
	Feb 13	Presentations	*Feb 15*	Presentations	Week 5. Conclude Phase 1, submit drawings and presentations
Phase 2. Concept Development	*Feb 20*	Lecture: Connectivity, Security, and Smart Urbanism	*Feb 22*	Lecture: Green, Healthy, and Resilient Cities	Week 6. Propose design ideas, prepare for desk crits
	Feb 27	Desk Crits	*Feb 29*	Desk Crits	Week 7. Create conceptual drawings
	Mar 5	Desk Crits	*Mar 7*	Desk Crits	Week 8. Improve conceptual drawings
	Mar 12	*No Class*	*Mar 14*	*No Class*	Spring Break
	Mar 19	Presentations	*Mar 21*	Presentations	Week 9. Conclude Phase 2, submit drawings and presentations
Phase 3. Design Development	*Mar 26*	Desk Crits	*Mar 28*	Desk Crits	Week 10-13. Build on conceptual design and create drawings to explain key design strategies and visualize imagined urban futures, each student focuses on detailed design of a focused area/component
	Apr 2	Desk Crits	*Apr 4*	Desk Crits	
	Apr 9	Desk Crits	*Apr 11*	Desk Crits	
	Apr 16	Desk Crits	*Apr 18*	Desk Crits	
	Apr 23	*Working week*	*Apr 25*	*Working week*	Week 14. Preparation for final presentations
	Apr 30	Final Presentations (Time and Location TBA)			

COURSE POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Deadlines: Please note the deadlines for all submissions. Students can add these to their calendar and proactively communicate with the instructors when encountering difficulty. Late submissions may be excused in exceptional situations, including sudden illness, bereavement, or family crisis. Unexcused late submissions will incur a penalty.

Emotional Support: The Counseling Center is committed to providing a range of services—including individual, couples, and group counseling—intended to help students develop improved coping skills to address emotional, interpersonal, and academic concerns. All these services are paid for through the health services fee. The Counseling Center offers primarily short-term counseling, but they also provide referrals to the community when students could benefit from longer-term services.

Disability Services: This course will accommodate students with documented disabilities. Please refer to the Disability Resource and Education Services website for more information and inform the instructor of any requests at the beginning of the semester.

Diversity: The Department of Urban and Regional Planning (DURP) is committed to creating an environment of inclusion and opportunity that is rooted in the very goals and responsibilities of practicing planners. Conduct that interferes with the rights of another or creates an atmosphere of intimidation or disrespect is inconsistent with the environment of learning and cooperation that the program requires. By enrolling in a course at DURP, students agree to be responsible for maintaining a respectful environment in all activities, including lectures, discussions, labs, projects, and extracurricular programs. Every student should follow the University Student Code. Please see the Student Code Article 1—Student Rights and Responsibilities for further details.

Academic Integrity: Please be aware of the university guidelines regarding academic integrity, which can be found under Article 1, Part 4 of the student code. Academic dishonesty includes behaviors such as cheating, inappropriate use of university equipment/material, fabrication of information, plagiarism (presenting someone else's work from any source as your own such as copying someone else's post), and so on. All forms of academic dishonesty will be reported to the student's home department and the College of Fine and Applied Arts.

Irregular Attendance: Class attendance is expected of all students at the University of Illinois, however instructors must reasonably accommodate a student's religious beliefs, observances, and practices in regard to class attendance and work requirements if the student informs his or her instructor of the conflict within one week after being informed of the attendance or work requirements. It is the instructor's decision as to when a student's absences become excessive and should be reported. If in the opinion of an instructor the attendance of a student becomes so irregular that their academic study is likely to be impaired, the instructor may submit an irregular attendance form to the Associate Dean of the student's college. A copy is forwarded to the student, who should contact the instructor immediately to work out a solution. If irregular attendance continues without excuse, the instructor may request the student be withdrawn from the course. This request for withdrawal would result in a grade of E for the course. Extenuating circumstances will always be considered when supporting evidence is presented. See Rule 1-501 and Rule 1-502 in the Student Code for more information.

Emergencies (Run > Hide > Fight): Emergencies can happen anywhere and at any time, so we must take a minute to prepare for a situation in which our safety could depend on our ability to react quickly. Take a moment to learn the different ways to leave the building in case of fire. In case of severe weather, move away from windows and go to a lower level in the middle of the building. If someone ever tries to hurt

us, the best option is to run out of the building. If we cannot do that safely, hide somewhere, lock or barricade the door if possible, and be as quiet as we can. Do not leave that safe area until we get an Illini-Alert confirming that it is safe to do so. If we cannot run or hide, fight back with whatever we can get our hands on. If you want to better prepare yourself for any of these situations, visit police.illinois.edu/safe. You can sign up for emergency text messages at emergency.illinois.edu.

COVID-19 Information: Keeping everyone safe and healthy remains our top priority. As the federal government's COVID-19 national emergency declaration has ended, students who test positive for COVID-19 can follow the CDC guidelines and the University's updates.