

Introduction to City Planning (Fall 2024, All Sections)

Course Overview

The city is a fact in nature, like a cave, a run of mackerel or an ant-heap. But it is also a conscious work of art, and it holds within its communal framework many simpler and more personal forms or art. Mind takes form in the city; and in turn urban forms condition mind.

- Lewis Mumford, *The Culture of Cities* (1938)

In his book *The Culture of Cities*, Lewis Mumford describes the city as both a natural phenomenon and the direct reflection of a complex series of intentional practices. In this class, we will explore both historical and contemporary dimensions of how cities form and develop—and how human interventions shape these complex processes. We will then draw upon a diverse range of sources to examine the past, present, and future of cities by engaging four distinct yet interrelated themes: **environment, equity, economy, and culture**. These themes will also help to structure your engagement with cities you are familiar with. Using our own experiences and knowledge, we will spend our time together examining how our minds take form in the city, and how cities shape and condition our minds.

Course Objectives

In this course, you will:

- Learn how cities and regions have evolved over time, and how these histories reflect what we observe as urban development and change
- Develop an understanding of the historical rationale for urban planning, with a focus on the evolving rationale for planning in the United States
- Gain knowledge about contemporary planning practice and current issues faced by planners
- Engage firsthand with urban planning issues and phenomena through your personal experience and through explorations in your local context

Course Structure

This course is divided into seven learning modules:

- Module 1: What is a City? (Weeks 1-2)
- Module 2: Urban History (Weeks 3-5)
- Module 3: Economy (Weeks 6-7)
- Module 4: Equity (Weeks 8-9)
- Module 5: Environment (Weeks 10-11)
- Module 6: Culture (Weeks 12-14)
- Module 7: The Future (Weeks 15-16)

Important Dates

All times in Central Time (CT)

Sunday	9/8/2024	Introduction to Cities Quiz Window Closes at 11:59 PM
Monday	9/16/2024	Assignment 1 Due
Sunday	9/29/2024	Urban History Quiz Window Closes at 11:59 PM
Monday	9/30/2024	Assignment 2 Due
Sunday	10/13/2024	Economy Quiz Window Closes at 11:59 PM
Monday	10/21/2024	Assignment 3 Due
Sunday	10/27/2024	Equity Quiz Window Closes at 11:59 PM
Sunday	11/10/2024	Environment Quiz Window Closes at 11:59 PM
Monday	11/11/2024	Assignment 4 Due
Sunday	11/24/2024	Culture Quiz Window Closes at 11:59 PM
Friday	11/29/2024	<i>No Discussion Section – Fall Break</i>
Wednesday	12/4/2024	Assignment 5 Due
Wednesday	12/11/2024	Assignment 6 Due

Assignments and Grading

Your course grade will consist of six written assignments, six self-guided quizzes, and an assessment of your course participation and engagement. These requirements are outlined in more detail below.

Assignments (60% of final course grade)

The majority of your course grade consists of six written assignments designed to engage you in thinking critically about course themes within the context of your past experience, as well as through a series of first-hand observations made within your local context. The topics of these assignments are as follows:

- Assignment 1: Photo Analysis and Essay
- Assignment 2: Jane's Walk
- Assignment 3: Mapping a Subsector of the Local Economy
- Assignment 4: Folded Map
- Assignment 5: Tactical Urbanism Proposal
- Assignment 6: Planning Your Utopia

I will drop your lowest assignment score at the end of the semester, and the remaining five assignments will be weighted equally in this portion of your final course grade. **Please see below for the course policy on late work.**

Quizzes (15% of final course grade)

Quizzes make up a small portion of your course grade, which is reflective of their purpose: to provide you with feedback on your comprehension of course readings and concepts. The topics of

these quizzes are as follows:

- Quiz 1: Introduction to Cities
- Quiz 2: Urban History
- Quiz 3: Economy
- Quiz 4: Equity
- Quiz 5: Environment
- Quiz 6: Culture

Quizzes will be taken online via Canvas. As we complete the learning module associated with each quiz, you will have a pre-announced window of time to complete your online quiz. Quizzes will cover readings as well as content discussed in lectures. Quizzes are **not** cumulative; they focus only on the content covered within the most recent learning module.

There are no make-up opportunities for quizzes in UP 101. However, I will drop your lowest quiz score at the end of the semester, and the remaining five quizzes will be weighted equally in this portion of your final course grade.

Attendance and Engagement (12.5% of final course grade)

Our class follows a lecture-discussion format. Video lecture materials will be available on Canvas, and you will be able to view this content at a time of your choosing. Discussion sections facilitated by your Teaching Assistant (TA) will be held on Fridays. You will be responsible for reviewing lectures and completing assignments and readings in time for the small group discussions. Although this course is taught online, **active participation and engagement is a baseline expectation for adequate performance in this class.** Weekly attendance will be taken in discussion sections, and you will be expected to actively engage in these sections.

Packback (12.5% of final course grade)

We will use the Packback platform as a forum for online discussion about class topics. Your participation in Packback is designed to help you synthesize content from our lectures and to pose questions which will prepare you to engage fully in discussion sections. Packback discussions will be open for 12 of our 16 weeks together, and you are required to participate in **at least eight** weeks of your choosing. Your engagement with Packback involves the following tasks for **each** of those weeks:

- Posting one question of your own by **Wednesdays at 11:59 PM CT**
- Posting two responses to your classmates' questions by **Thursdays at 5:00 PM CT**

Your Packback posts must be related to the week's lecture/reading content and will be graded based on depth and engagement.

There are no make-up opportunities for Packback posts in UP 101. However, I will drop your lowest four Packback scores in calculating your final course grade. In other words, you will only be graded for eight weeks of Packback; you may skip the other four weeks OR use them to replace low grades on the weeks you complete.

Grading Policies

Late work: Assignment due dates and times are listed above in the syllabus and on the assignments

themselves. You are expected to turn your work in on time. As noted above, there will be **no make-up opportunities for:**

- Quizzes (though I will drop your lowest score)
- Packback posts (though I will drop your lowest four scores)

For the six written assignments, late work will **only** be accepted if you have made arrangements with your TA or Professor Braun **before 5:00 PM CT** on the day the assignment is due. Late work submitted with no arrangement made prior to 5:00 PM CT on the day the assignment is due will **automatically receive a grade of 0**. If these prior arrangements **have** been made, late work will be accepted but will be **automatically graded down by 5 points per 24-hour period past the submission deadline** (for example, if your assignment is due at 5:00 PM, a paper receiving a score of 94 submitted at 5:01 PM would receive a graded score of 89—a shift from an “A” to a “B+”). In rare cases, extensions without penalty may be granted at the discretion of Professor Braun under extenuating circumstances (e.g., documented family or medical emergency). We will also work with students whose documented DRES accommodations include exceptions to the rules surrounding late work. Please note that technical difficulties with assignment submissions on Canvas/Packback are **not** acceptable excuses for late work, so please plan to give yourself plenty of time before the deadline to submit your work.

Grading scale: Your work, quizzes, and participation will be assessed on a 100-point scale. **No grading curve** will be applied in this class. You will receive a letter grade for this class only at the end of the semester. Your final grade will be based upon the weighted average of your assignment, quiz, and participation scores and will reflect the following letter grade equivalents:

A	> 94	C	74-76.99
A-	90-93.99	C-	70 - 73.99
B+	87 - 89.99	D+	67 - 69.99
B	84-86.99	D	64 - 66.99
B-	80-83.99	D-	60 - 63.99
C+	77 - 79.99	F	< 59.99

There will be **no rounding** applied to your grades. To achieve a desired grade in this course, you will need to apply yourself *consistently* throughout the semester. Extra credit opportunities may be offered at the discretion of Professor Braun; however, they should not be expected (or requested).

Attendance, Learning Environment, and Expectations

Academic accommodations: This course will accommodate students with documented disabilities. To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students should contact both the instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. You can contact DRES at 1207 S. Oak Street, Champaign, by phone at (217) 333-1970, or via email at disability@illinois.edu.

Important note: Students who are registered with DRES who are in need of special accommodations should provide Professor Braun with the appropriate RFA letter within the first two weeks of the course.

Learning environment: The learning environment in this class depends upon your presence and participation. Full and respectful participation is expected for both lecture and discussion sessions.

Quizzes: Quizzes will cover readings, lecture content, and content covered in discussion sections. No study guides will be provided for quizzes; you are expected to actively organize your learning and information in this class.

Course attendance: Weekly attendance will be taken in discussion sections, and unexcused absences from these sessions will lower your course participation grade. Excused absences may be granted at the discretion of Professor Braun for health emergencies or in situations where religious beliefs, observances, and practices or work requirements irregularly conflict with course attendance.

If you are unable to attend a discussion session, **you must notify your TA in advance of that session** in order for an excused absence to be considered. An excused absence will not be approved if you notify your TA after the session. In addition to notifying your TA prior to the beginning of the session you will miss, documentation (for example, an official note from McKinley Health Center or the Emergency Dean) may be required in order for an excused absence to be approved. While your TA will be your primary point of contact for requests for excused absences, Professor Braun retains the sole authority to approve or deny requests for excused absences.

If in the opinion of Professor Braun the attendance of a student becomes so irregular that their scholarship is likely to be impaired, Professor Braun will submit an [irregular attendance form](#) to the Associate Dean of your college. A copy is forwarded to you. In this instance, you should contact Professor Braun immediately to work out a solution. If irregular attendance continues without excuse, you may be asked to withdraw from the course. This request for withdrawal would result in a grade of W 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.

Counseling Center and student assistance: Throughout the semester, you may need assistance coping with emotional, interpersonal, or academic concerns. [The Counseling Center](#) provides both short-term and longer-term counseling to students who may need assistance. Professor Braun and your TA are also available to assist you. Please do not hesitate to reach out or request assistance.

Honor Code

The Illinois Student Code states: “It is the responsibility of the student to refrain from infractions of academic integrity, from conduct that may lead to suspicion of such infractions, and from conduct that aids others in such infractions.” Note that you are subject to the Honor Code, as well as procedures for addressing violations to the Code, regardless of whether you have read it and understand it. According to the Code, “ignorance is no excuse.”

To meet this standard in this course, note the following: in written work, all ideas (or other information) that are not your own must be cited. To be certain that you are meeting this course expectation, all written assignments will be processed through the Canvas Safe Assign system and/or Packback plagiarism checking platform, both of which analyze written work for signs of plagiarism. While this course does not require a standard citation style or formatting, we suggest you use either APA (American Psychological Association) or MLA (Modern Language Association) formats for in-text references and your reference sections. Please consult your TA or a university librarian if you have questions about appropriate reference formatting. Note that ideas that require

citation may not have been published or written down anywhere. While you are free—and indeed encouraged—to discuss assignments with your peers, all of your information collection, analysis, and writing should be your own. The consequence for violating these expectations may include receiving no credit for the assignment in question, and at the discretion of Professor Braun, may include automatic failure of the course.

Planning at Illinois is committed to maintaining a learning environment that is rooted in the goals and responsibilities of professional planners. By enrolling in a class offered by the Department of Urban and Regional Planning, students agree to be responsible for maintaining an atmosphere of mutual respect in all DURP activities, including lectures, discussions, labs, projects, and extracurricular programs. See Student Code Article 1-Student Rights and Responsibilities, Part 1. Student Rights: §1-102.

Policy on Use of Generative AI Tools

Writing is not just how we express our ideas; it's how we develop our ideas.

- David Labaree, educational sociologist

The written assignments in this course are designed to develop, challenge, and refine your understanding of city planning and broader urban phenomena. This type of understanding cannot be gained from an algorithm or machine; it must come from an iterative process of critical thinking, writing, reflection, and revision. I expect you to engage in this process throughout the semester, submitting work that you've written in your own voice and from your own unique perspective.

While generative AI tools are no replacement for your own creativity, I recognize their potential when used responsibly and ethically. I **will** therefore allow these tools for the following activities:

- Brainstorming and refining your ideas
- Tweaking an outline that you have drafted yourself
- Improving the structure (e.g., organization, transitions) and clarity (e.g., grammar, syntax, style) of written text that you have drafted yourself

The use of generative AI tools is **NOT** permitted in this course for the following activities:

- Writing a draft of a written assignment
- Writing entire sentences, paragraphs, or papers to complete class assignments

When in doubt, think of generative AI tools as providing the type of assistance you might receive from a campus writing tutor: they may ask you questions as you brainstorm, help you avoid the passive voice, identify sentences and paragraphs where information is not coming across clearly—but they should never (and *would* never) do any of your writing directly for you. **Better yet**, get this assistance from a real-life human at the [Illinois Writers Workshop](#) here on campus! This is a free resource for our students, and it will always be better than ChatGPT.

Violations of this policy will be treated as academic dishonesty/plagiarism. If you choose to use generative AI tools in this course, I strongly recommend that you keep a detailed log of all prompts you enter and all responses you receive. You may be asked to show this documentation if improper AI use is suspected. Please note that additional requirements and policies related to AI use may be implemented for individual assignments (and may supersede this general policy); in this case, all

new requirements/policies will be clearly outlined on the assignment prompt.

Please reach out to me and/or your TA with any questions about the use of generative AI tools. We look forward to reading your original work and seeing how your ideas and perspectives develop over the course of the semester!