Instructor: Gordon Douglas, PhD
Office location: Washington Square Hall WSQ 218A
Telephone: (email preferred)
Email: gordon.douglas@sjsu.edu
Office hours: Tuesdays 1:30 – 3:30 (by appointment please)
Class days/time: Tuesdays 4:30 – 7:00 PM
Classroom: Clark Hall CL 303B
Prerequisites: None for 231

Upper division standing or instructor consent required for 151.
Units: 4

Course Catalog Description
URBP 231: Urban design as part of the planning process; contemporary and historic urban design thought and ways of improving design quality in the urban environment.

URBP 151: Principles, goals and methods of the urban design process. Urban design as the comprehensive treatment of the human-made environment. Prerequisite: Upper division standing or instructor consent.

Course Description and Course Learning Objectives
This course provides a graduate-level introduction to the ideas that have shaped the design of cities and the principles informing the practice of urban design. We will explore significant components of theory and practice across the disciplines of architecture, urban planning, and landscape urbanism, and consider how they are intertwined with social, environmental, and cultural factors. The course is mainly organized around the different scales or sites at which urban designers think and work today, but focuses also on important moments of urban design in history, major theories, concepts and critiques, and some key methods for research and practice.
We typically spend part of each session with lecture, discussion, and (as needed) presentations of assignments, but when possible we also spend some of our class time on the streets of San José examining how design of all sorts shapes the city.

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Interpret and assess the contemporary city in terms of both historical contexts and modern urban design principles.
2. Apply design tools and principles to urban spaces across scales, from the fundamentals of wayfinding and social interaction in public space to the sustainability and resilience of metropolitan regions.
3. Describe how urban design decisions can both shape and reflect local character, economic development goals, or planning priorities.
4. Demonstrate basic design skills through visual presentations of site design proposals.

Planning Accreditation Board (PAB) Knowledge Components

This course partially covers the following PAB Knowledge Components: 1.(b), 1.(d), 1.(e), 2.(b), 2.(c), 3.(c), 3.(d), and 3.(e). A complete list of the PAB Knowledge Components can be found at http://www.sjsu.edu/urbanplanning/courses/pabknowledge.html.

Required Course Texts

All required readings are listed by week in the course schedule below. Most of these readings are available digitally via the library or elsewhere online.

Some of the readings come from the following books. You probably only need to actually buy these if you are interested in owning a copy, because they can be found at the library in physical form (on course reserve) and I have noticed that several of them can also be found posted online with a bit of digging. That said, these are nice books for any planner / designer to have on her or his shelf.


Lynch, Kevin. 1982/1984. *A Theory of Good City Form*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press. (Originally published with the above title, the book was republished as *Good City Form* in 1984. The former is the version on reserve and findable online; they are basically the same.)


Whyte, William H. 1980. *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*. New York: Project for Public Spaces. (Again this has been published and republished a few times, any version works.)

The other required readings listed in the course schedule below are either available online (i.e. from electronic journals via the library website), on course reserve, or will be distributed in class/Canvas.

San José State University

Urban and Regional Planning Department
# Course Requirements and Assignments

Your grade for the course will be based on the following assignments and other activities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Due Date(s)</th>
<th>Percent of Course Grade</th>
<th>Course Learning Objectives Covered</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td></td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participate in class discussion and demonstrate comprehension of assigned readings and themes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Responses</td>
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<td>10%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brought to class on five occasions throughout the semester; two points each.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sketch of Four Locations</td>
<td>Sept. 10th</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identify and sketch in perspective or in plan four locations in a city you know well (such as a street, an open space, a configuration of buildings, etc.) to demonstrate each of the four approaches discussed in the Barnett reading. Briefly explain in a short write-up how each derives from that approach.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Students in 151 may choose three of the four to do.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Street Comparison (Engagement Activity)</td>
<td>Oct. 1st</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
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<td>Analyze two streets in terms of the qualities mentioned by Edmond Bacon, Jan Gehl, Alan Jacobs and others. About 2 pages, with illustrations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay on Design and Community Character</td>
<td>Nov. 19th</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3</td>
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<td>Write a short research paper (around 4-7 pages) considering the following question: How does the built environment reflect or influence (or both) the cultural character of a place? Consider the question at the neighborhood scale, but include site-specific examples (streets, plazas, buildings, signs, streetscaping) as well as some considerations of the broader city or region. Make sure to discuss both the formal/top-down and informal/bottom-up design elements that characterize a place.</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Expected paper length for students in 151 is 3-5 pages.</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Design Proposal (Engagement Activity)</td>
<td>Dec. 10th</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
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</table>
| Choose an existing area of several city blocks (could be urban neighborhood, suburban town center, industrial district, random edge space...) that you think needs improvement from an urban design standpoint to become a more functional, appealing, sustainable, mixed-use neighborhood. (The site needn’t be square – it could be a rectangular site surrounding a length of street you want to focus on, for instance). Visit and
analyze the site: conduct a basic land-use survey and observe local activity. Think about what the people who live in, work in, or traverse this area need, want, or would benefit from. Propose a re-design of the area to promote a healthy, just, and sustainable “urban village,” including a written justification referencing texts from the course and at minimum one site plan and one design illustration showing the interrelationship between building uses, public space, transit, existing infrastructure, etc. Justification includes ‘self-critique’ (what works and what doesn’t). Students will briefly present their projects on the final day of class.

*For 151 students this assignment can be completed in groups of 2 if preferred.

Detailed instructions for each assignment will be discussed and distributed in class, and on the course website. Different expectations for undergraduate students as opposed to graduate students will be explained in detail.

**Late Assignments**

Assignments are due on the dates stated above and readings are to be completed before class. Because our in-class discussion depends on students having done the reading, and some class meetings will be devoted to presentations and review of student work, assessment will often rely on students being present in class with their work completed. Written assignments will be accepted late with a grade reduction by one half-step letter grade (accidental? semitone?) every day or two it is late. For example, if an assignment warranted an “A” and was one or two days late, the final grade would be an “A-”; after three days: B+, five or six days “B,” and so on down.

**Final Examination or Evaluation**

This course is evaluated through multiple assignments and class participation. The final assignment, a hypothetical proposal for the redesign of a neighborhood site (see above), is due during the final class meeting, during which time students will briefly present their projects.

**Grading Information**

The course grade consists of four main assignments. The first two assignments are each worth 15% of the grade (15 points each), the next is worth 20% (20 points) and the final project is worth 30% (30 points), with 2 points for each completed Reading Response memo and a final 10% allotted based on an evaluation of course participation.

For course letter grade: A+ (98 and above); A (93 to 97); A- (90 to 92); B+ (88 to 89); B (83 to 87); B- (80 to 82); C+ (78 to 79); C (73 to 77); C- (70 to 72); D+ (68 to 69); D (63 to 67); D- (60 to 62); F (below 60).

**Course Workload**

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.
Because this is a four-unit class, you can expect to spend a minimum of nine hours per week in addition to time spent in class and on scheduled tutorials or activities. Special projects or assignments may require additional work for the course. Careful time management will help you keep up with readings and assignments and enable you to be successful in all of your courses. For this class, you will have to undertake additional activities outside the class hours such as completing the assigned reading, visiting your field site, and completing assignments (including preparing for the presentation). Details on how to complete these activities will be provided in class.

**Classroom Protocol**
Students are expected to attend every class session and arrive on time and come prepared with readings and any assignments completed, ready to fully participate in discussion.

Most days, class will begin with a lecture relating to the topic and readings for the day; questions and discussion should be part of this lecture, and questions will be asked of students throughout. We will then move to a period of open discussion where students will be expected to offer their thoughts on the topics in the readings and lecture and how these relate to their experiences and professional work. When assignments are due, we will talk through them and students may be asked to share their work. Some days, we will use some of our class time to go out into the streets nearby and walk around looking at examples of the things we’re learning about. Some days we may have a visitor or attend a relevant presentation on campus. Changes will be announced at least two weeks in advance.

**University Policies**
Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/)

**Plagiarism and Citing Sources Properly**

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's language, images, data, or ideas without proper attribution. It is a very serious offense both in the university and in your professional work. In essence, plagiarism is both theft and lying: you have stolen someone else's ideas, and then lied by implying that they are your own.

Plagiarism will lead to grade penalties and a record filed with the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. In severe cases, students may also fail the course or even be expelled from the university.

If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, it is your responsibility to make sure you clarify the issues before you hand in draft or final work.

Learning when to cite a source and when not to is an art, not a science. However, here are some common examples of plagiarism that you should be careful to avoid:

- Using a sentence (or even a part of a sentence) that someone else wrote without identifying the language as a quote by putting the text in quote marks and referencing the source.
- Paraphrasing somebody else's theory or idea without referencing the source.
• Using a picture or table from a webpage or book without reference the source.
• Using data some other person or organization has collected without referencing the source.

The University of Indiana has developed a very helpful website with concrete examples about proper paraphrasing and quotation. See in particular the following pages:
• Overview of plagiarism at www.indiana.edu/~istd/overview.html
• Examples of plagiarism at www.indiana.edu/~istd/examples.html
• Plagiarism quiz at www.indiana.edu/~istd/test.html

If you still have questions, feel free to talk to me personally. There is nothing wrong with asking for help, whereas even unintentional plagiarism is a serious offense.

Citation style
It is important to properly cite any references you use in your assignments. The Department of Urban and Regional Planning uses Kate Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th edition (University of Chicago Press, 2013, ISBN 780226816388). Copies are available in the SJSU King Library. (The book is also relatively inexpensive, and you may wish to purchase a copy.) Please note that Turabian’s book describes two systems for referencing materials: (1) “notes” (footnotes or endnotes), plus a corresponding bibliography, and (2) in-text parenthetical references, plus a corresponding reference list. Students may use either of the styles in this course, as long as they pick one or the other to use consistently throughout any given assignment.

Library Liaison
The SJSU Library Liaison for the Urban and Regional Planning Department is Peggy Cabrera. If you have questions, you can contact her at peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu or 408-808-2034.

Recommended Software
Adobe Photoshop and other software from the Adobe Creative Cloud suite can be useful in creating the renderings required for the final project. This software is available free to students via the university at: http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/adobe/students/index.html

SketchUp is another program that some students fine valuable. An educational version is also available free to students from the developers: https://www.sketchup.com/download

*We will spend part of one class day with a tutorial for some simple street design collage and rendering techniques using Photoshop.
URBP 231 – URBAN DESIGN IN PLANNING
URBP/DSIT 151 – INTRODUCTION TO URBAN DESIGN

FALL 2019

COURSE SCHEDULE

*Subject to change with fair notice – any changes will be announced in class well in advance. Readings listed here are to be completed before that day’s class.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic, Reading and Assignment</th>
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| 1   | 8/27 | Introduction: What Is Urban Design?  
Review syllabus and watch first part of Gary Hustwit’s *Urbanized* |
| 2   | 9/3  | A Brief History of Urban Form  
Kevin Lynch. *Good City Form*. "Form Values in Urban History" (pp. 5-36), "Between Heaven and Hell" (pp. 51-72), "General Settlement Patterns" (pp. 373-85).  (*This book is on reserve at the library, but also try looking for it online!*)  
Edmund Bacon. 1974. *Design of Cities*. “Stirrings of the New Order” (pp. 123-27), “18th and 19th Century European Design” (pp.171-85), “Development of Paris” (pp. 187-93), and “John Nash and London” (pp. 201-15).  (*The library has three copies of this book, two of which are on reserve.*) |
| 3   | 9/10 | What Does a Good City Look Like? Theories and Perspectives  
Kevin Lynch: *Good City Form*. "What is the Form of a City and How is it Made?" (pp. 37-50), "Three Normative Theories" (pp. 73-98), "Some Sources of City Values" (pp. 359-72).  
Jonathan Barnett. 2016. *City Design: Modernist, Traditional, Green, and Systems Approaches*. “1. Three City Design Challenges” (pp. 1-12) and “6. An Integrated Way to Design Cities” (pp. 223-37).  *available as an e-book via the library*  
Bonus fun: take a look at some Aldo Rossi architectural drawings and paintings, online (a basic image search for his name and “drawings” will do it) or in the book *Drawings and Paintings*. |
No. | Date | Topic, Reading and Assignment
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*Four Locations Assignment due. See Canvas*

| 4 | 9/17 | City Patterns in Languages and Typologies

Kevin Lynch: *Good City Form.* "A Language of City Patterns" (pp. 345-58). Also flip through the whole of Lynch’s "Appendix D: A Catalog of Models of Settlement Form" (pp. 373-455).

*This is a good opportunity to practice skimming!* Note also that there is an outline of Appendix D on pp. 454-455.

Alexandra Lange. 2019. “Let Christopher Alexander Design Your Life” (a re-reading of his 1977 classic *A Pattern Language*).


| 5 | 9/24 | Streets

Kevin Lynch: *Good City Form.* "Circulation” and “Modal Choice " (pp. 419-36).


(*This book is on reserve at the library.*)

Jan Gehl. *Life Between Buildings.* “To Assemble or Disperse” (pp. 81-100) and “Soft Edges” (pp. 183-97).

(*This book is available as an ebook via the library.*)


Field excursion: Walking tour of our immediate neighborhood to discuss good streets, bad streets, and urban typologies.

*Reading response 2 due for in class discussion*

| 6 | 10/1 | Blocks, Squares, Plazas, and Passages

Edmund Bacon. 1974. *Design of Cities.* “Involvement” (pp. 23-32) and “The Structure of the Square” (p. 94-99)

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic, Reading and Assignment</th>
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<td>Field excursion: Downtown design with Jason Su, SJ Downtown Association.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>10/8</td>
<td><em>Street Comparison Assignment Due.</em></td>
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<td><strong>Parks, Gardens, and Green Corridors</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10/15</td>
<td><strong>Walkable, Mixed Use, and Transit-Oriented Neighborhoods</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic, Reading and Assignment</td>
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| 9   | 10/22| **Designing for Local Character and Community Identity**


Rojas, James. 2010. “Latino Urbanism in Los Angeles” (pp. 36-45) in Jeffrey Hou’s *Insurgent Public Space*. (This book is available as an ebook via the library).


| 10  | 10/29| **Adaptive Re-Use and Retrofitting the Bay Area**

Dunham-Jones, Ellen & June Williamson. 2011. “2011 Update” (pp. xiii-xxii) and “Ch. 4: Retrofitting Social Life Along Commercial Strips” (pp. 59-94) (please also take a look at the case study that follows it on pp. 95-107) and “Ch. 11: Suburban Office and Industrial Park Retrofits” (pp. 203-218) all in their *Retrofitting Suburbia: Urban Design Solutions for Redesigning Suburbs*. Hoboken: Wiley. (This book is available as an ebook via the library.)


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<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic, Reading and Assignment</th>
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| 11  | 11/5   | **Informality, Do-it-Yourself Urban Design and Tactical Urbanism**


Lydon, Mike & Street Plans Collaborative. 2012. Tactical Urbanism Vol. 2. Available from the authors on issuu at:
http://issuu.com/streetplanscollaborative/docs/tactical_urbanism_vol_2_final

*Essay on Design and Community Character due*

| 12  | 11/12  | **Mean Streets vs. Accessible Design**

Mike Davis. 2006 (1990). “Fortress L.A.” (pp. 221-64) in his City of Quartz. (This book is available as an ebook via the library.)


Steve Wright & Heidi Johnson-Wright. 2016. “Design for Everybody” American Planning Association website:
http://www.planning.org/planning/2016/mar/designforeverybody/

Guest speaker: Melinda Wang, Callander Associates

*Reading response 5 due for in class discussion*

| 13  | 11/19  | **Critiques of Contemporary Design**

http://jamessrussell.net/Enough-of-bogus-placemaking/
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<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic, Reading and Assignment</th>
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*Essay on Design and Community Character due*

14 | 11/26 | **Online Class: Photoshop Tutorial and Design Ideas**

*Before class starts, please make sure you are on a computer with Adobe Photoshop installed. Class will meet online via Zoom for a visual walk-through tutorial of Photoshop collage techniques and other strategies for creating simple but effective renderings of urban design ideas.*


*Look at other project resources on Canvas*

15 | 12/3 | **The Future Today: Climate Change, Informal Settlements, and Beyond**


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<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic, Reading and Assignment</th>
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<tr>
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<td>12/10</td>
<td><strong>Conclusions and Final Presentations</strong></td>
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<td><em>Neighborhood Design Proposal assignment due</em></td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>Finals week</strong></td>
<td>12/17 (no class unless needed)</td>
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