Instructor: Gordon Douglas, PhD
Office location: WSQ 218A / Zoom
Email: gordon.douglas@sjsu.edu
Office hours: Tuesdays 12:30pm - 2:30pm (by appointment please)
Class days/time: Tuesdays 4:30 – 7:00 PM
Classroom: WSQ 208
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 / DSIT 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 and other cities examining how design of all sorts shapes the city. This includes two field trips (see below).
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 a site design proposal.

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 and on Canvas. Most of these readings are available digitally via the library or elsewhere online.

Some of the readings come from the following four books, which you might want to consider purchasing. You do not need to buy them if you are not interested in owning a copy, because I’ve made sure they can be found online in some fashion or another. That said, these are nice books for any planner / designer to have on their 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. 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) or will be distributed in class/Canvas.

Required or Recommended Software
Adobe Photoshop and other software from the Adobe Creative Cloud suite will be useful in creating the renderings required for the final project. We have a session on Photoshop collage...
techniques in week 13. This software is available for download free to students via the university at: http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/adobe/students/index.html

Adobe Spark is another creative cloud product that we have access to, with students can create quick and easy graphic-heavy webpages. It’s a great alternative to the traditional written (e.g. Word) document for submitting an assignment. This software is available for download 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 find valuable. An educational version is also available free to students from the developers: https://www.sketchup.com/download

*We will spend one class day on a tutorial for some simple street design collage and rendering techniques using Photoshop.

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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sketch of Four Locations</td>
<td>Sept. 8th</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>1, 2, 4</td>
</tr>
<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. Submit in Word doc or Adobe Spark page.</td>
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<tr>
<td>*Students in 151 may choose three of the four to do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Street Comparison (Engagement Activity)</td>
<td>Oct. 1st</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Analyze two streets in terms of the qualities mentioned by Edmond Bacon, Jan Gehl, Alan Jacobs and others. About 2 pages, written with illustrations. Submit in Word doc or Adobe Spark page.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Essay on Design and Community Character</td>
<td>Nov. 16th</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>1, 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write a short research paper (around 1,000-1500 words*) 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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<td>*Expected word length for students in 151 is 750-1200.</td>
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4. Neighborhood Re-design Proposal
(Engagement Activity)

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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading Responses</th>
<th>10%</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Brought to class on five occasions (a sixth is extra credit)</strong> throughout the semester; two points each. Submitted in in Word or in the body of an email by noon on the day of class.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Participate in class discussion and demonstrate comprehension of assigned readings and themes.</strong></td>
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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.

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, logging in on time and prepared with readings and any assignments completed, ready to fully participate in discussion. This is a small graduate seminar style course that relies on student engagement and participation, so my preference is for
everyone to be present with their cameras turned on. (That said, I understand that this may not always be possible for everyone for technological and personal reasons. Please just do your best.)

In addition to assigned readings and assignments, course content is conveyed through lecture, discussion, and other class-time activities, so missing class may negatively affect your grade. I will not be recording class sessions this year. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to obtain class notes or instructions from a colleague in class. Every student is expected to participate in class discussion regularly. Regular participation makes the class more interesting and exciting for all of us!

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. After a break, 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 guest lecturer. Changes will be announced at least two weeks in advance.

**Accessibility and Accommodations**

We all learn in different ways and we all bring different types and levels of academic preparedness to class, depending on everything from life experiences and personal circumstances to individual minds and bodies.

If you believe you face limitations to your access or ability to be a full participant in this class, please inform me of specific challenges or accommodation needs at the start of the course. Students with documented disabilities can register with the Accessible Education Center and receive specific accommodation plans which should be shared with me. Students without documented disabilities who may still need specific accommodations should also reach out to the AEC and/or contact me to discuss specific needs.

I am making my own effort to make this course and all course materials more universally accessible. I am sure it is not there yet. If you notice any course components – whether having to do with technology, readings and assignments, in-class discussion and activities, or even this syllabus – please let me know.

**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.
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 Liaison Librarian 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.
URBP 231 – URBAN DESIGN IN PLANNING  
URBP/DSIT 151 – INTRODUCTION TO URBAN DESIGN  
FALL 2021  
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic, Readings, Assignments Due</th>
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</table>
| 1     | 8/23 | **Introduction: What Is Urban Design?**  
Review syllabus, course expectations. Short walking tour downtown.  
Before class, read:  
(See Canvas module.) |
| 2     | 8/30 | **Urbanized**  
*This session is ASYNCHRONOUS. No Class on 8/30. Instead, do the readings and please watch:*  
Gary Hustwit’s *Urbanized*, available with SJSU login on Kanopy:  
https://sjsu.kanopy.com/video/urbanized-2  
Reading:  
Kevin Lynch. 1981. *Good City Form*. Ch. 1. Form Values in Urban History (pp. 5-36) and Ch 2. What is the Form of a City and How is it Made? (pp. 37-50).  
(*Purchase this book or see Canvas module!)*  
(Purchase this book or see Canvas module.)  
*Reading response 1 due on Canvas*  
*Also on Aug. 30th, consider attending SPUR’s free “All Use Buildings” event:*  
3 9/6 On Zoom @ 5pm

**We Make the City**

*Guest Lecturer:* Prof. Kerry Rohrmeier. Discuss Four Locations Assignment.

Kevin Lynch: *Good City Form*. Ch. 3. Between Heaven and Hell (pp. 51-72) and Ch. 4. Three Normative Theories (pp. 73-98). (*Purchase this book or see Canvas module.)*


*Four Locations Assignment due. See Canvas*

4 9/13 In Person

**City Patterns in Languages, Elements, and Typologies**

Kevin Lynch: *Good City Form*. Appendix B. 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. (*Purchase this book or see Canvas module.)*


*Reading response 2 due for in class discussion*

5 9/20 Field Trip (TBD)

**Streets**

Allan B. Jacobs. 1995. *Great Streets*: Part 4. “Requirements for Great Streets” and “Qualities that Contribute” (pp. 270-92). (*Purchase or see Canvas.*)
### Plazas, Squares, Paseos, and Passages

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<th>6</th>
<th>9/27 On Zoom</th>
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- **Jan Gehl.** *Life Between Buildings.* “To Assemble or Disperse” (pp. 81-100) and “Soft Edges” (pp. 183-97). Available as an ebook via the library: [https://sjsu-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1cue0e3/01CALS_ALMA51542846800002901](https://sjsu-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1cue0e3/01CALS_ALMA51542846800002901)


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- **Edmund Bacon.** 1974. *Design of Cities.* “Involvement” (pp. 23-32) and “The Structure of the Square” (p. 94-99). (Purchase this book or see Canvas module.)

- **William H. Whyte.** 1980. “1. The Life of Plazas” (pp. 16-23) and “2. Sitting Space” (pp. 24-39). In *The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*. (Purchase this book or see Canvas module.)


*Street Comparison Assignment Due.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Field Trip (Davis)</th>
<th>Parks, Gardens, and Nature in the City</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10/8</td>
<td>No Class on 10/4</td>
<td><em>This day's content will be covered on a Saturday field trip to Davis. Attendance is not mandatory but is highly encouraged. In exchange for your time, there will be no regularly-scheduled class on Tuesday the 4th.</em></td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Field Trip (TBD)</th>
<th>Walkable, Mixed-Use and Transit-Oriented Neighborhoods</th>
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https://publicpolicy.pepperdine.edu/davenport-institute/content/reports/urban-villages.pdf

Check out latest version of Smart Code at www.smartcodecentral.org

*Reading response 3 due for in class discussion**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9/18</td>
<td>Designing for Local Character and Community Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/25</td>
<td>Adaptive Re-Use and Retrofitting the Bay Area</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Designing for Local Character and Community Identity


https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Planning_(new_site_map_walk-through)/Level_3_-_General/GPliteUrban_Design_policies.pdf


### 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. Available as an ebook via the library: https://sjsu-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/egdih2/TN_cdi_askewsholts_vlebooks_9781118027691

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Resource/Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/01</td>
<td>Drawing and Rendering (Photoshop Tutorial and Design Ideas)</td>
<td>This session is ASYNCHRONOUS. No Class on 11/01. Instead, do the readings and view the recorded lecture on Canvas. This will comprise a visual walk-through tutorial of Photoshop collage techniques and other strategies for creating simple but effective renderings of urban design ideas. Before viewing, it will be helpful to make sure you are on a computer with Adobe Photoshop installed and running so that you can follow along. Check out John King’s wonderful 2015 piece, “Architectural Renderings Reveal Narrow Vision of the Future,” SFGate website: <a href="https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Architectural-renderings-reveal-narrow-vision-of-6106932.php#photo-7587436">https://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Architectural-renderings-reveal-narrow-vision-of-6106932.php#photo-7587436</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/01</td>
<td><strong>Informality, Do-it-Yourself Urban Design and Tactical Urbanism</strong></td>
<td><strong>Election Day! Vote Before Class</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
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| 13  | 11/15 On Zoom | **Mean Streets vs. Accessible Design**

*Guest speaker:* Melinda Wang, Callander Associates

- Mike Davis. 2006 (1990). “Fortress L.A.” (pp. 221-64) in his *City of Quartz*. Available as an ebook via the library: [https://sjsu-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1cue0e3/01CALS_ALMA71385144920002901](https://sjsu-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/f/1cue0e3/01CALS_ALMA71385144920002901)


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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
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<td><em>Reading response 4 due for in class discussion</em></td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/6</td>
<td><strong>Final Presentations</strong></td>
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<td><em>In class presentations, 8-10 mins, see Canvas.</em></td>
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<td>12/13</td>
<td><strong>Scheduled Final Exam Period</strong></td>
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<td><em>Neighborhood Design Proposal assignment due by 11:59pm</em></td>
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*Reading response 5 due for in class discussion*