

# Principles of Urbanism

GCU 494/598 (proposed GCU 516)

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Emily Talen, Professor

MW, 12:00 pm to 1:15 pm

Coor 5635

Office: 5618 Coor Hall

Office hours: MW 10:00 am to 12:00 pm or by appointment

Email: [etalen@asu.edu](mailto:etalen@asu.edu)

*Urbanism is the study of cities - their geographic, economic, political, social and cultural environment, and the imprint of all these forces on the built environment.*

- The perfectly adequate Wikipedia definition of urbanism

*Principles of Urbanism* is a new course that will serve as an introduction and overview of the basic tenets, disciplinary threads, and bodies of scholarship associated with the idea of urbanism.<sup>1</sup> *Urbanism* is generally defined as the study of cities, but different fields focus on different aspects. In urban planning and architecture, urban form and structure is the focus. In sociology, urbanism may be more about social interaction and community within the context of cities. Historians may be particularly interested in historical patterns of urban growth and change. What all fields have in common is a concern for the created human habitat and the problems – and potential solutions – that habitat inspires.

Interest in urbanism has surged in the past two decades. Urbanisms of many kinds have entered the urban lexicon, each staking out its own discriminating take on the urban realm. Recent book titles speak to the complexity of perspectives involved: the “Option of Urbanism”, “Sustainable Urbanism”, “Recombinant Urbanism”, “X-Urbanism”, “New Urbanism”, “Integral Urbanism”, “Magical Urbanism”, “Splintering Urbanism” and “Everyday Urbanism” – all books published in the last decade. These are not singular, isolated commentaries. Often they are attached to, and reflective of, broader social, cultural and political

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<sup>1</sup> The course will constitute the required core course for a new shared Ph.D. Concentration in Urbanism.

movements. These are the kinds of cross-disciplinary perspectives students in this course will engage.

One reason for the growth of interest in urbanism is that in post-industrial, global society, many view the human habitat as problematic. There is a normative (“what *ought* to be”) aspect to the study of urbanism, and scholarship is very often focused on the need to find a new way of looking at, and resolving, how humans are supposed to create sustainable urban places. For this reason, students in this course will be asked to apply their reading and discussion-based understanding of urbanism to an active exploration and analysis of urbanism as they experience it.

## Goals of Course

- To introduce students to the concept and meaning of urbanism from a variety of perspectives.
- To provide a general overview of how the idea of urbanism interrelates to social, political, cultural and economic forces shaping cities and regions.
- To discuss current debates about urbanism within the context of changing environmental and socio-economic factors.
- To further students’ ability to think about and articulate the current importance of urbanism, including how policy goals and sustainability concepts are affected.

## Course Requirements

### A. Reading

This is a reading and lecture-based course. There is an intensive reading schedule, compiled as a course reader, and students will be expected to have read these selections prior to each class period (see schedule below).

### B. Course Project

Students will work individually or in teams (depending on class size) to complete a course project, to be presented in class during the final week. The project is intended to motivate students to apply knowledge gained from the readings to a “real world” understanding of urbanism in context. The project should utilize the theory, history, design and/or implications of urbanism in a creative, inter-disciplinary way. The project can be exploratory (e.g., what is urbanism?) or explanatory (e.g., what has been the experience of urbanism, for example in terms of justice/injustice?). It can be empirical and data-based or experiential and visual. A variety of methods and topics will be encouraged. An important requirement will be the preparation of a project proposal (max. 3 pages) by mid-semester. In addition to the final presentation, each student will be required to hand in a written explanation of the project (max. 10 pages).

## C. Exams

There will be two exams – a midterm and a final. Exams will be drawn from course readings, lectures, and discussions in class. The final exam will be cumulative.

## Grading

5%	participation/attendance
5%	project proposal
40%	course project
20%	midterm exam
30%	final exam

## Organization

The course will be organized around six themes:

- Urban origins (week 1, 2)
- Urbanism defined: competing models (week 3, 4, 5)
- Urbanism vs. “nature” (week 6,7)
- The economics of urbanism (week 8,9)
- Urbanism and society (week 10,11,12)
- The future of urbanism (week 13, 14)

## Schedule

### Urban origins

#### **Week one**

Childe, V. Gordon. 1950 (2004). “The Urban Revolution”. In Thomas C. Patterson and Charles E. Orser, *Foundations of Social Archaeology: Selected Writings of V. Gordon Childe*. Alta Mira Press. Pp. 107-116.

Morris, A.E.J. 1979. “The Early Cities”. In *History of Urban Form Before the Industrial Revolutions*. London: George Goodwin. Pp. 1-18.

Smith, Michael E. 2007. Form and Meaning the the Earliest Cities: A New Approach to Ancient Urban Planning. *Journal of Planning History* 6, 1: 3-47.

## **Week two**

Mumford, Lewis. 1968. "The Crystallization of the City." In *The City in History: Its Origins, Its Transformations, and Its Prospects*. New York: Harvest Books. Pp. 29-54.

Jacobs, Jane. 1969. "Cities First – Rural Development Later". In *The Economy of Cities*. New York: Random House. Pp. 3-48.

Abu-Lughod, Janet L. 1993. "The Islamic City: Historic myth, Islamic essence, and contemporary relevance." In Hooshang Amirahmadi and Salah S. El-Shakhs, Eds., *Urban Development in the Muslim World*. New Brunswick, NJ: Center for Urban Policy Research. Pp. 11-36.

## Urbanism defined: competing models

### **Week three**

Hall, Peter. 2002. "The City in the Garden". In *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century*. Oxford: Blackwell. Pp. 87-141.

Jacobs, Jane, 1961. "The Kind of Problem a City Is". In *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. NY: Random House. p. 428-440.

Mumford, Lewis. 1968. "Home remedies for urban cancer". In *The Urban Prospect*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. Pp. 182-207.

### **Week four**

Sert, Jose Luis. 1944. "General Measures for the Redistribution of Work-Places in Cities"; and "Man and the City". In *Can Our Cities Survive? An ABC of urban problems, their analysis, their solutions*. Cambridge: The Harvard University Press. Pps. 143-154, 227-239.

Fishman, Robert. 2007. "Revolt of the Urbs: Robert Moses and his Critics". In Hilary Ballon and Kenneth T. Jackson, Eds., *Robert Moses and the Modern City: The Transformation of New York*. New York: Norton. Pp. 122-129.

Mumford, Eric. 2002. "Introduction", "The Modern Architects' Congress", and "The Theme of the Functional City". *The CIAM Discourse on Urbanism, 1928-1960*. Cambridge: MIT Press. Pp. 1-15 and 59-65.

### **Week five**

Talen, Emily. 2005. "Principles: Urbanism vs. Anti-Urbanism". In *New Urbanism and American Planning: The Conflict of Cultures*. London: Routledge. Pp. 37-68.

Ellin, Nan. 1996. "Urban Design Theory: The Anglo-American Axis". In *Postmodern Urbanism*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press. Pp. 87-113

Harvey, David. 1993. Social Justice, Postmodernism and the City. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 16: 588-601.

## Urbanism vs. "nature"

### **Week six**

Cronon, William. 1996. "The Trouble with Wilderness; or, Getting Back to the Wrong Nature". *Uncommon Ground*, W.W. Norton & Company. Pps: 69-90.

Cronon, William. 1991. "Reading Turner Backwards" and "Mapping Capital". In *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West*. New York: W.W. Norton. Pp. 46-54, 263-309.

## **\*\*\*Midterm exam\*\*\***

### **Week seven**

Crowe, Norman. 1997. "Nature and the City". In *Nature and the Idea of a Man-Made World: An Investigation into the Evolutionary Roots of Form and Order in the Built Environment*. Cambridge: The MIT Press. Pp. 205-232.

Fishman, Robert. 2002. "The Bounded City". In Kermit C. Parsons and David Schuyler, Eds., *From Garden City to Green City: The Legacy of Ebenezer Howard*. Pp. 58-66.

Kunstler, James Howard. 2001. "London: Landscape as the cure for cities". In *The City in Mind*. New York: The Free Press. Pp. 225-252.

## The Economics of Urbanism

### Week eight

Sassen, Saskia. 2006. "Place and Production in the Global Economy". *Cities in a World Economy*. Pine Forge Press, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Pp. 1-14.

Logan, John R. and Harvey L. Molotch. 1988. "The City as a Growth Machine". In *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*. Berkeley: University of California Press. Pp. 50-98.

Florida, Richard. 2004. "Cities and the Creative Class". In *Cities and the Creative Class*. New York: Routledge. Pp. 27-48.

### Week nine

Jacobs, Jane. 1970. "The Valuable Inefficiencies and Impracticalities of Cities". *The Economy of Cities*. New York: Vintage Books. pp. 85-121.

Rae, Douglas W. 2005. "Business and Civic Erosion: 1917-1950". In *City: Urbanism and its End*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press. Pp. 215-253.

Leinberger, Christopher B. 2008. "The Standard Real Estate Product Types: Why Every Place Looks Like Every Place Else". In *The Option of Urbanism: Investing in a New American Dream*. Washington, D.C.: Island Press.

## Urbanism and society

### Week ten

Wirth, Louis. 1938. "Urbanism as a Way of Life," *American Journal of Sociology*, V. 44. Pp. 1-24.

Sennett, Richard. 1992. "The City as an Anarchic System". In *The Uses of Disorder: Personal Identity and City Life*. New York: W.W. Norton. Pp. 172-188.

Brain, David. 2005. "From Good Neighborhoods to Sustainable Cities: Social Science and the Social Agenda of the New Urbanism". *International Regional Science Review* 28, 2: 217-238.

### Week eleven

Sugrue, Thomas. 1998. "Crisis: Detroit and the Fate of Postindustrial America". *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Pp. 259-272.

Fishman, Robert. 1993. "The Decline of Megalopolis as a Cultural Center". In Theodore Barker and Anthony Sutcliffe, Eds., *Megalopolis: The Giant City in History*. London: Macmillan.

Mitchell, Don. 2003. "The Illusion and Necessity of Order: Toward a Just City". In *The Right to the City: Social Justice and the Fight for Public Space*. Pp. 227-238.

## Future prospects

### Week twelve

*Science*, Special Issue on "Cities". February 8, 2008. Vol. 319, issue 5864, pages 693-836.

Boone, Christopher G. and Ali Modarres. 2006. "Feeding Cities that Consume Farmland", in *City and Environment*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press. Pp. 77-94.

### Week thirteen

Ellin, Nan. 2005. "What is Integral Urbanism?" and "Five Qualities of an Integral Urbanism". In *Integral Urbanism*. London: Routledge. Pp. 5-15.

Waldheim, Charles. 2006. "Introduction: A Reference Manifesto" and "Landscape as Urbanism". In *The Landscape Urbanism Reader*. New York: Princeton Architectural Press.

Chase, John, John Kaliski and Margaret Crawford. 1999. Introduction. *Everyday Urbanism*. Monacelli Press.

Farr, Douglas. 2007. Introduction. *Sustainable Urbanism: Urban Design with Nature*. New York: Wiley.

Krieger, Alex. 2002. "Arguing the 'Against' Position: New Urbanism as a Means of Building and Rebuilding our Cities". *The Seaside Debates*, Rizzoli International Publications, Inc. Pps. 51-58.

#### **Week fourteen**

Sorkin, Michael. 1992. "See You in Disneyland". In Michael Sorkin, Ed., *Variations on a Theme Park: The New American City and the End of Public Space*. New York: Hill and Wang. Pp. 205-232.

Kunstler, James Howard. 2001. "Utopia of Clowns". Pp. 141-163, and "Atlanta: Does Edge City have a Future?". In *The City in Mind*. New York: The Free Press. Pp. 41-75.

Davis, Mike. 2006. "The Urban Climacteric". In *Planet of Slums*. New York: Verso. Pp. 1-19.

#### **Week fifteen**

Final Student Presentations: Principles of Urbanism - Case studies