

UP456: Sustainable Planning Workshop

Time: 10:30-12:00 M,W

Room: 223 Temple Buell Hall

Instructor: Brian Deal (deal@illinois.edu), 228 TBH

Office hours: by appointment

Credits: 4 Hours

Prerequisite: Graduate standing in UP or related discipline, or Consent of Instructor

Course Overview

"Wherever I go I see buildings imposed. Imposed because they are inappropriate, insensitive. They are crystallized monologues which do not meet the needs of people or place. In the days of hand-power it was easier to go around a tree root or a boulder or follow a contour than go straight through. The lines that resulted - for path, field boundary or building placement were for pragmatic reasons if no other, in conversation with the landscape." Christopher Day - Places of the Soul.

Historically, ecological stimuli shaped the development patterns of the human community. Traditional planning and design solutions were the products of parochial regionality, based in large part on available materials, energy sources, climatic conditions and navigable transportation routes. These inherent ecological conditions directly influenced the community its built environment. In housing, the southwestern adobe style, Texas dogtrot and northeastern shingle style are design solutions based on the specific geography of the place they originated from. The adobe style utilizes locally available building components with large thermal masses to offset the hot dry days and cool nights of the desert. The dogtrot captures the prevailing winds of the Texas plains to naturally cool the structure and the shingle style uses long sloping roofs and locally abundant cedar to protect against the driving rain and snow of the Atlantic coast. These geographically specific solutions were important for the development of a community that derived its identity from the ecology of place. But the ecology of place is rapidly being replaced by more intensive and sometimes technologically based solutions, systematically removing our natural connections and ecological decision making processes. Planners must understand the ways in which ecologically sensitive design can influence quality of place if they are to facilitate the creation and maintenance of more livable, vibrant, and healthy cities and towns.

Meanwhile, as Scott Campbell (1996) reminds us, sustainable planning is about more than just good design. The so-called "3 E's" of Equity, Economic development and Environmental stewardship are the backbone of effective sustainable planning. True sustainability requires planners to balance high quality site and building design with a host of other elements that will impact the well-being of the residents of the site, the city, the region and, ultimately, the world. These decisions require a broad knowledge base and the ability to weight the tradeoffs inherent in every decision that planners and designers make.

This course will focus on a holistic approach to planning and site design. Research into indices of sustainable development and related literature will establish parameters for local design and development issues to be applied to a sustainable site planning project.

This is a group project with a defined scope and a unified outcome that considers research and local issues of land use planning, community design, site design, and policymaking within a sustainable planning context

The pedagogical objectives of this course involve: 1) the introduction of ideas of sustainable planning and their application, 2) examination of the connections between good design and issues of equity, economics and environmental stewardship, and 3) exploration of the ways in which land use planners can create and shape more sustainable development policies.

The group project format will help the students discover the intricacies of working within a team structure, and perhaps their own individual strengths. The existence of a real client will help students understand the issues and tradeoffs that planners face in their daily practice.

Learning Philosophy

This is a seminar/workshop type course that involves learning, research and application. Discussions will be encouraged and participatory learning will be essential and stressed. This course will require self-directed work, teamwork, time management, multi-tasking and critical thinking.

Course Organization

The class will initially focus on gaining an understanding of sustainable design through an examination of ideas and application. Readings that help describe sustainable landuse planning lead to a short research project on different aspects of sustainability, sustainable design or sustainable development. Students will present a report on their research to the class at the completion of this phase. A class volume describing the found and applicable sustainable ideas will be produced and used as the basis for application to a client driven planning project. The course will culminate in a plan, presentation and report on the designs and policies created for the applied project.

Course Materials

There is 1 book required for this class:

Douglas Farr. Sustainable Urbanism: Urban Design with Nature. Wiley and Sons

This can be purchased online. Other reading will be required, as determined by discussions and issues raised during the course. Much of this reading will be available as downloadable PDF's; however, please be prepared to spend money on photocopying and/or printing for some of these articles.

Course Policies

Attendance is mandatory, and will be reflected in your class participation grade. More than three unexcused absences will reduce your participation grade by a letter grade. Due to the team nature of the projects and the participatory learning stressed in this course, absences by one student can have adverse affects on the entire class. If you know in advance of expected absences, please discuss this with the instructor as early as possible.

All final course grades will be assessed on the following basis:

- A: Excellent. Goes beyond requirements
- B: Good. Satisfies all the requirements
- C: Average. Satisfies many requirements
- D: Poor. Does not meet many requirements
- F: Failed. Does not meet most requirements

Incompletes will be awarded only in rare circumstances and with advance approval of the instructor. Simply not completing a required assignment does NOT automatically generate an incomplete grade for the course.

Special Circumstances

Students who have special needs or circumstances should contact the instructor as soon as possible. Every effort will be made to work with students with unusual or unexpected obligations outside the course (family emergencies, health issues, participation in University sanctioned sports or other activities, etc.). However, due to the participatory nature of this course, please also communicate any expected or unexpected absences with the instructor and your fellow students. Students with disabilities who require any accommodations to facilitate full participation and completion of the course should contact the instructor as soon as possible

Student conduct

From the University Student Code, Article 1, Part 3: Students enrolling in the University assume an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the University's function as an educational institution and suitable to members of the academic community.

Students are responsible for knowing their rights and responsibilities as found in the student code at <http://www.admin.uiuc.edu/policy/code/index.html>

Course Schedule Outline

The course will be divided in into four phases.

- Study/Research 25pts Week 1-6
this phase requires each student to research a particular piece in sustainable design and present a short paper relating to the findings
- Defining Sustainability
 - Sustainable rating systems
- Thematic data analysis 20pts Week 6-8
this is the local data collection phase in response to the given project
- Local data and potential sustainability indicators
 - Suitability analysis
 - Application of research
- Program Development 10pts Week 8-11
this phase strategizes implementation and planning applications of the research conducted, utilizing data collected
- site visit
 - expert input
 - outcomes of this phase will be preliminary master plans, including a critique of work to date
- Design and Plan 25pts Week 11-15
the final stage includes assimilation of all previous work into final designs as well as analysis and suggested policies and standards necessary to facilitate the proposed plan
- Presentation materials 10pts Week 15
outcomes of this phase include a final presentation to the client and a final report
- Participation 10pts