Tuesday-Thursday 9:30-11:00; Room: 9-354 (CRE Lecture Hall)

Dennis Frenchman, Leventhal Professor of Urban Design and Planning  dennisf@mit.edu
Jota Samper, Lecturer in City Design and Development  jota@mit.edu
Lou Thomas, Teaching Assistant  lou_t@mit.edu

Office Hours: DF: Tu 11:00-12:30, Rm 10-400; JS: TBA, Rm 10-400; LT: TBA, Rm 10-947

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This subject introduces graduate students to ideas about the form of cities and how they are designed and developed. The subject is organized into two parts:

Part 1 explores the Forces which act to shape and to change cities. Starting with Boston and the American city as a reference, we will examine key forces affecting contemporary urban development including: market economics, social forces, public development, regulation of private development, and incentives to encourage good design. Finally we will consider how cities define a vision for their future and how these are articulated in plans and proposals. Lectures will be supplemented by guest presentations, case studies and field trips.

Part 2 surveys Models of urban design which have been invented in response to forces acting on cities. We will discuss the evolution of each model and its current impact on design and development in cities worldwide, located in Great Britain, Italy, China, Latin America, and elsewhere. In particular, we will focus the Traditional City, the City as a Work of Art, the Efficient City, the Garden (or Ecological) City, the Secure City, the Experience City, and the Smart City. The application of each model will be illustrated in case studies and guest presentations.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Work for the class will include readings, class participation, and two papers related to the two units of the course. Students will also be required to keep a simple journal reflecting on the readings. Student grades will be determined as follows:

- Research papers and journal assignment: 75%
- Participation in classes, discussion sessions, and field trips: 25%

Readings provide a context for class lectures and are also intended to expose students to the ideas of key urban design theorists on the topics presented. Please complete all required readings in advance of each class. Readings are available on Stellar at: http://stellar.mit.edu/S/course/11/fa14/11.301j/index.html
Stellar is MIT’s web-based platform that contains all relevant information for the course. You need MIT web certificates installed on your computer. See TA Lou Thomas if you have any problem.

We will provide additional information on your assignments as the semester progresses (see course schedule below) via detailed assignments and a research workshop session.

OPTIONAL RECITATION FOR CREDIT

For students with a special interest in urban design, or a desire to delve more deeply into particular topics in the subject, we will offer this year an optional recitation. The recitation will give participants the opportunity to discuss and debate the readings in the syllabus and to follow up on concepts raised in class. The recitation will also provide guidance and support on the two required research papers.

The recitation will be organized by Lou Thomas, a PhD student in City Design and Development and TA for the subject. The session will meet each week for one hour at a time to be determined with the group. Students electing to participate in the recitation will be expected to attend the sessions regularly and to participate in the discussions, for which they will receive an additional 3 credits. (reading course, number to be announced)

Since there is limited time for discussion in class, we urge students to consider this option, which will enrich your learning.

MIT NOTES

Disabilities. If you have a documented disability, or any other problem you think may affect your ability to perform in class, please see the instructor early in the semester so that arrangements may be made to accommodate you.

Academic Integrity. Plagiarism and cheating are not acceptable. Never (1) turn in an assignment that you did not write yourself, (2) turn in an assignment for this class that you previously turned in for another class, or (3) cheat on an exam. If you do so, it may result in a failing grade for the class, and possibly even suspension. Please see the instructor if you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism.
SYLLABUS AND SCHEDULE

1. Thurs. Sept. 4  INTRODUCTION
   Can cities be designed? Course structure and objectives.


PART 1: FORCES AFFECTING URBAN DEVELOPMENT

2. Tues. Sept. 9  VIEWPOINTS ON THE CITY
   How are cities understood? City themes and city culture. Ways of representing cities. The idea of imaging a city from the viewpoint of its inhabitants: Kevin Lynch. Lowell, MA as an example in changing the viewpoint on a city.


   SENSEable City Lab, MIT. http://senseable.mit.edu Browse website, in particular: Illuminating Clay, Real Time Rome, NYTE New York Talk Exchange, Trash Track

Exercise 1 Distributed

3. Thurs. Sept. 11  THE FORCES THAT MADE BOSTON
   How does a city grow? The city viewed as a process of cultural and physical evolution. How underlying forces are given form through design.

Following are general references for this lecture and for Exercise 1, available in Rotch Library. **You should study these to help select and research your site:**


**4. Sat. Sept. 13**

**WALKING TOUR OF BOSTON.**

9:45 AM - 2:00 PM. Meet at the Prudential Center Observatory lobby (ground floor). We will conclude the tour in the North End where you can have lunch. *Required field trip.*

**5. Tues. Sept. 16**

**MARKET FORCES**

The City viewed as a business. Land use, land value and urban development.
Understanding how uses are located: the bid rent curve; cities as central places. Functional patterns of market and form: concentric zones, sectors, nodes. Evolution of the patterns -- from the walkable city to edge city.


**6. Tues. Sept. 16 (Evening)**

**RECITATION SESSION, EXERCISE 1: URBAN CHANGE**

Research methods and topic development. What would make a good place to study? What resources are available? How do you document urban change over time -- and into the future? Time TBA. *Attendance strongly recommended.*

**7. Thurs Sept. 18**

**CASE STUDY: BOSTON’S WEST END**

Renewal as a market imperative, or “It was just the money alone”. *(The Lost Neighborhood, CBS documentary)* Guest: James Campano, Editor, *The West Ender.*


Identify Place for Exercise 1.

8. Tues.  
   Sept. 23  
   SOCIAL FORCES  
The city from the viewpoint of communities and their residents. Interrelationships of neighborhoods, class association and form: Dudley Street Initiative, Roxbury.


   Mark Lipman and Leah Mahon. Holding Ground: The Rebirth of Dudley Street. 1996. Video documentary to be shown in class; available in Rotch Library.

   Sept. 25  
   STATE FORCES  
The city viewed by those in power. Public development and its arenas: Infrastructure, redevelopment, and housing. How is public development financed and carried out? City design as a political endeavor: from Haussmann to Robert Moses and Nelson Rockefeller.


10. Tues.  
   Sept. 30  
   CITY-MAKING 1: PUBLIC-PRIVATE INTERVENTION  
Regulation of private development: Zoning and incentives to influence what the market provides. Evolution of land use control to shape the "good" city; protect scarce resources. Zoning and the form of New York City, from Hugh Ferris to Michael Bloomberg.


11. Thurs.  Oct 2  **CASE STUDY: SHAPING THE INDUSTRIAL CITY**
Guest: Eran Ben-Joseph, Professor of Landscape Architecture and Planning. How design codes have shaped and been shaped by industrial uses. The dialectic between industry and production, and urban form. Future trends.


12. Tues.  Oct 7  **CITY-MAKING II: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS**
The entrepreneurial viewpoint. Joining public and private interests. Revitalizing downtowns with new incentives, formulas for development, and types of projects. From festival marketplace to urban Olympics.


Discussion will focus on the readings. Please submit a journal (any length) reflecting on the readings thus far in the course to *jota@mit.edu* by 9am. Questions to consider: Can you design places without designing buildings? Which tools of urban design have shaped the place you are examining for the first assignment? Time TBA.  *Required Session.*

Meet at BRA offices, top floor Boston City Hall, Model Room. 9:30-10:30AM.
Host: Prataap Patrose, Director Urban Design.

*Readings for next two sessions:*


Leave Boston 2:30 Return 9 PM. Guests: Barnaby Evans, creator/producer of WaterFire.


The city as viewed from the future. Types of plans and plan makers. The planning process. The role of urban design projections in shaping city form and function: Who are the visionaries and where do their ideas come from? Themes and visions for Boston.

17. Thurs. Oct. 16 DISCUSSION OF EXERCISE 1
Exercise 1 due in class. Student presentations.

PART 2: MODELS OF URBAN DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

18. Tues. Oct. 21 THE TRADITIONAL CITY
The confluence of culture, geography, and form. The line and the grid as traditional models: Colonial towns in New England and Georgia. Neo-traditionalism: Seaside to Poundbury, G.B.


Exercise 2 Distributed
The following are general Readings for Exercise 2:


19. Thurs.  
Oct. 23  
THE CITY AS A WORK OF ART  


20. Tues.  
Oct 28  
CASE STUDY: THE POLITICAL ART OF CAPITAL CITIES.  
Guest: Professor Larry Vale


24. Thurs.  
Oct. 30  
CASE STUDY: THE END OF THE SUBURBIA?  
Guest: Professor Robert Fishman, University of Michigan, historian and critic.


http://www.salon.com/books/feature/2000/04/13/suburbs/

23. Tues.  
Nov. 4  
THE GARDEN (ECOLOGICAL) CITY  
How do ideas of nature influence the way cities are perceived and built? How natural processes and urban form interact. The search for a green, sustainable city.


21. Thurs. Nov. 6
THE EFFICIENT (MACHINE) CITY


25. Thurs. Nov. 6 (evening)
RECITATION SESSION
Please submit a journal (any length) reflecting on the readings in the second half of the course to jota@mit.edu by 9am. Questions to consider: What planning strategies/tools could be employed to reshape the city or suburbs? What strategies/tools of change are in the Plan you are studying? Required session.

THE SECURE CITY
Public safety vs private safety. Impact of security on urban design. Post 9/11 and the city as battlefield.


27. Tues. Nov. 18
CASE STUDY: GROWTH AND SECURITY IN INFORMAL NEIGHBORHOODS
Informal settlements make up one third of the world’s urban population. What is this form of urbanization? How can design affect security and regeneration of these neighborhoods? Medellin, Colombia and Rio de Janeiro Brazil.


28. Thurs.
Nov. 20

THE EXPERIENCE CITY
Experience development as a force in urban design. Narrative places. The involvement of information and media in form. From Disney World to Dubai.


29. Tues.
Nov. 25

THE SMART CITY
Putting a “nervous system” into the city, and its effects on human behavior, activities and form. Smart urban systems that are sensed, continuously analyzed, and can incrementally respond over time. Stochastic as opposed to visionary urban design. Implications for theory and practice.


30. Tues.
Dec. 2

DEBATING THE MODELS
Are emerging models of urban design helping to produce a good city? Class interactive exercise.


31. Thurs.
Dec. 4

THE GOOD CITY. Reconciling ideals and the real. Discussion of models of urban design and development and their applicability in practice. Whose values should the city reflect?


Exercise 2 Due.

32. Tues.

WRAP UP. Discussion of Exercise 2.
Dec. 9