4.252J/11.301J: URBAN DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT

Tuesday & Thursday, 9:30-11:00, with additional sessions as noted in the schedule.
Room: 9-354 (CRE Lecture Hall)

Anthony Vanky, Lecturer in Urban Design and Planning. tvanky@mit.edu
Aria Ritz Finkelstein, Instructor. ariaritz@mit.edu
TBD, Teaching Assistant.

Office Hours:
AV: Tuesday at 11:30-1:00p or by appointment, Rm 10-400.
ARF: Thursday at 11:15-12:3 or by appointment.
TA: TBA

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This subject introduces graduate students to theories about how cities are formed and the practice of urban design and development, using US and international examples. The subject is organized into two parts:

Part 1 analyses the Forces, which act to shape and to change cities. Starting with Boston as a reference, we will examine key forces affecting contemporary urban development such: market economics, social forces, industrial production, the natural environment, public development, 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 key Models of physical form and social intervention that have been deployed to resolve competing forces acting on the city. The models reflect discrete languages of city making. We will discuss the evolution of each model, practical consequences, and potentials for resolving emerging urban problems and opportunities. The models include: Tradition, Art, Efficiency, Ecology, Security, Emotion and Intelligence. The application of the models will be illustrated in historic and contemporary project cases from Europe, Asia, Latin America, and the US.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Work for 4.252j/11.301j will include readings, class participation, and two papers related to the two units of the course. Students will also be required to keep a 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. Students have complete all required readings in advance of
each class, and prepared to discuss the material in class. Readings are available on Stellar at: http://bit.ly/IntroUDD

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 the Instructor or TA if you have any problems.

It goes without saying that students are expected to attend each class. There are several events that outside of the regular Tuesday/Thursday meeting times noted in the syllabus, and whether they are required is noted. Some events are optional, but still highly recommended.

ASSIGNMENTS

We will distribute information on assignments as the semester progresses (see course schedule below), and provide assistance to students in undertaking the work. Assignments include:

- Assignment 1: Urban Change, asks you to trace the evolution of one place in Boston through time, and to predict its future.

- Assignment 2: Urban Plans, challenges you to evaluate an urban design intervention of your choice anywhere in the world to answer the question: Was this a good plan?

- Journal: Will document your own thoughts, comments, and challenges on the readings, discussions and class material. Journal entries should be in conversation with multiple topics and readings. Although each entry may be of any medium (paper, blog, etc.), they should represent substantial thought and synthesis of the subject matter. A minimum of two entries, each of at least 1,000 words, is expected. Alternative media ideas are welcome, but should be discussed with the teaching team in advance.

In addition to their use in the journals, students are expected to do the readings prior to class. The readings are often assembled to provide thematic debate, offer contemporary and traditional perspective within a topic, or serve as a foundation for in-class exercises. Therefore, it is important students come prepared. The class is not structured around discussions of each specific reading, but for students who are interested in engaging more deeply with this material, the following is an option:

OPTIONAL READING AND DISCUSSION GROUP 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 representative cases related to the concepts raised in class and reflect on the readings in the syllabus. The recitation will also provide guidance and support on the two required research/design papers.

The recitation will be organized by Aria Finkelstein, PhD student in City Design and Development and Instructor for the subject. The session will meet for one hour on Fridays (TBC) 4-5 times throughout the semester 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. 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

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<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Thursday Sept 07</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>Can cities be designed? Course structure and objectives.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Tuesday, Sept 12</td>
<td>VIEWPOINTS ON THE CITY</td>
<td>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. Regeneration of Lowell, MA.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Thursday, Sept 14</td>
<td>THE FORCES THAT MADE BOSTON</td>
<td>How does a city grow? The city viewed as a process of cultural and physical evolution. How underlying forces are given form through design.</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Saturday, Sept 16</td>
<td>WALKING TOUR OF BOSTON - <strong>Required field trip.</strong></td>
<td>9:45 AM – 2:30 PM. Meet at the Prudential Center Observatory lobby (ground floor). We will conclude the tour in the North End where you can have lunch.</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Tuesday, Sept 19</td>
<td>ECONOMIC FORCES + URBAN FORM</td>
<td>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. From the walkable city to edge city.</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Thursday, Sept 21</td>
<td>SOCIAL FORCES + URBAN FORM</td>
<td>The city from the viewpoint of communities and their residents. Interrelationships of neighborhoods, class association and form. Public housing, Hope VI, Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative, Boston.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Tuesday, Sept 26</td>
<td>STATE FORCES + URBAN FORM</td>
<td>The city viewed by those in power. Eminent domain. Public development and its arenas: Infrastructure, redevelopment, and housing. How is public development financed and carried out? City design as a political endeavor: from Paris, New York, and New London.</td>
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<td>Thursday, Sept 28</td>
<td>CITY–MAKING I: PLANNING THE FORMAL CITY</td>
<td>Land allocation, use, and regulation of private development: Zoning and incentives to influence what the market provides. Evolution of land use control to shape the “good” city and protect scarce resources. New York City and Sao Paulo.</td>
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| Tuesday, Oct 3 | Tuesday  | CITY-MAKING III: PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS  
| Wednesday, Oct 4 | Wednesday | RECITATION SESSION, ASSIGNMENT 1: URBAN CHANGE  
Research methods and topic development. How do you document urban change over time – and into the future? What resources are available? Using graphics to support your argument. References and citations. Time TBA. Attendance strongly recommended. |
| Thursday, Oct 5   | Thursday  | CITY MAKING II: NON-PLANNING the INFORMAL CITY  
Guest: Dr. Jota Samper, University of Colorado-Boulder  
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 and Rio de Janeiro |
| --           | Tuesday   | Holiday – no class.                                                                                 |
| Wednesday, Oct 11 | Wednesday | RECITATION SESSIONS – Required Session  
Discussion will focus on the readings. Please submit a journal reflecting on the readings thus far in the course onto Stellar 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. |
| Thursday, Oct 12 | Thursday  | CASE STUDY: PRIVATE DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC BENEFITS  
Guest: Kairos Shen, former Planning Director, City of Boston (TBC)  
The city is made largely by individual private development and projects, working within a framework of zoning and other regulations. Are these regulations sufficient to protect the public interest? What additional public benefits can the city expect developers to provide? Examples of projects and controversies in Boston. |
| Tuesday, Oct 17 | Tuesday   | FIELD VISIT: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
Host: Prataap Patrose  
Meet at BRA offices, top floor Boston City Hall, Model Room. 9:30 –10:30AM. |
| Thursday, Oct 19 | Thursday  | CITY MAKING IV: THE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS  
Design as a tool of analysis, synthesis and decision-making. The importance of urban visions and who makes them. The development process: how is good design achieved? |
| Tuesday, Oct 24 | Tuesday   | CASE STUDY & PRESENTATIONS OF ASSIGNMENT 1  
In class exercise. Student presentation of Assignment 1. |

PART 2: MODELS OF CITY-MAKING / CITY-FORMING
VALUES OF CONTEMPORARY URBANISM
Urban design as a cultural language. Recurring themes: public and private; machine and nature; density and dispersion; local culture and global; the rich and the poor. Recurring elements: neighborhoods, production spaces, markets, streets, public places, transport spaces, and symbols. Class discussion on form, human behavior, and value systems.

TRADITION

CASE STUDY: MAKING A 21st CENTURY PUBLIC REALM
Guest: Barnaby Evans, artist/producer, Waterfire (TBC)

"WATERFIRE"/ WALKING TOUR OF PROVIDENCE, R.I. – elective, but awesome!
Host: Barnaby Evans, artist creator, and producer of Waterfire
Leave Boston 2:30 Return 9 PM.

THE ART OF PLACEMAKING
Symbolic places and form. From Baroque Rome to the Chicago and the Worlds Columbian Exposition: City Beautiful and its continuing impact. Contemporary art of creative place-making: Georgy Kepes, Otto Piene and CAVS at MIT.

THE CITY IN NATURE
Aria Finkelstein
How have the way people understand the relationship between cities and nature changed? How does this understanding influence the way cities are planned and built? How do uses of “nature” in cities express particular social norms and political ideologies?

CASE STUDY: Green Development
Guest: Bill Browning, CEO Terrapin Bright Green (TBC)

RECITATION SESSIONS – Optional Session
Hands-on workshop on diagraming, illustrating your ideas. This session can support Exercise 2.

THE EFFICIENT CITY
The city as a mechanism for production. The utopian industrial city: From Pullman to the 1939 New York World’s Fair. Impacts on urban development policy: public housing, highways, and urban renewal.
26 Tuesday, Nov 21

PEOPLE-CENTERED DESIGN
Bottom-up processes to inspire design. How design can be more responsive to the human experience of a city’s inhabitants from public spaces to private domiciles. Methods for understanding the “ballet” of people through urban spaces.

27 Thursday, Nov 23

Thanksgiving Holiday – No class.

27 Tuesday, Nov 28

THE DEFENSIVE / DEFENSIBLE CITY
Aria Finkelstein
How do notions of power and security shape urban form? How do planning and urban design serve to include some and exclude others? How do the uses and design of public space shape, enforce, and/or challenge societal power relationships?

28 Wednesday, Nov 29

RECITATION SESSION
Please submit a journal entry(-ries) reflecting on the readings in the second half of the course to Stellar 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.

29 Thursday, Nov 30

EXPERIENCE CITY
Experience development as a force in urban design. Narrative places. The engagement of information and media in urban form. Las Vegas to Singapore to Dubai.

30 Tuesday, Dec 5

INTELLIGENT AND PRODUCTIVE CITIES
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 future practice:

31 Thursday, Dec 7

ASSIGNMENT 2 – Presentation and Conversation.
Assignment 2 due; discussion and student presentations of Assignment 2.

32 Tuesday, Dec 12

THE GOOD CITY.
Reconciling ideals and the real. Discussion of languages of urban design and development and their applicability in practice. Whose values should the city reflect? Debating whether a truly “good city” possible to design? In-class exercise and debate.