SURP 848
Community Design

COURSE OUTLINE

School of Urban and Regional Planning, Queen's University

Winter Term 2017-2018

Course Instructor: Dr. Carl Bray

Course Date and Time: Tuesdays, 2:30 p.m. to 5:20 p.m.

Course Location: MacCorry Hall, Room E230
Why take this course?

Community (urban) design is not just big architecture: it is the physical manifestation of the planning policies you prepare. If you are to be effective planners, you need to understand what your policies will look like when translated into three-dimensional form, and when developed in real places, with real people using them. In other words, urban design is the way you test your plans.

You are being trained as planners: most urban design professionals are trained either as landscape architects or architects. That means that none of you, most likely, will become urban designers unless you acquire further design training. This course, therefore, can only scratch the surface of what an urban design professional does. However, it is nonetheless a vital part of your training because it is both an introduction to urban design as a field of practice and a chance to learn the basic tools for designing urban spaces. You will be a more intelligent and effective planner if you know something about urban design.

What will you need to succeed in this course? A curiosity about what makes great places is a pre-requisite. You will need a willingness to analyze places in terms of their physical form and the ways in which those forms function. You need to get out and experience places with all your senses, to understand how different people use places, and why. Finally, you will need to learn and apply basic skills in historical research, site analysis, socio-economic research, sketching, photography, and reporting, to the creation of viable designs for urban revitalization of an actual part of Kingston.

Learning outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Show the relevance of urban design to planning;
- Understand the scope of urban design issues within planning in Canada, with a focus on Ontario;
- Demonstrate different approaches and techniques of urban design;
- Develop a basic understanding of the concepts and tools available to translate planning objectives into good designs;
- Demonstrate and test these concepts and tools using case studies within an existing part of downtown Kingston; and
- Become future planning professionals who are versed in urban design and able to be effective policy makers and project managers.
Course content & format:

The course meets once per week. Classes involve a combination of weekly lectures and in-class activities. The course will have two key elements: research reading using City studies, augmented by the required course texts, and a design project using a local case study. Much of the course will involve working on the project in class, assisted by the course instructor. Throughout the course, students will be encouraged to draw and be given drawing lessons, so bring a sketch note book to class.

The course is divided into three parts:

• **Part 1: Introduction to Urban Design**
  - Readings (course texts)
  - Analysis of personal understanding of good places
  - Analysis of precedents
  - Analysis of local case study area (history; current built form; land uses/local business profile; demographics/local social portrait; existing/draft OP and ZBL provisions)

• **Part 2: Design of Case Study Area**
  - Small group projects, each focusing on an aspect of a case study district in North Kingston
  - Site analysis, precedents, design brief, design guidelines, 3D site plan
  - Whole class discussions of lessons learned

• **Part 3: Assessing Designs**
  - In-class presentation
  - Critique (invited critics)
  - Final report

• **Learning tools:**
  - Readings (course texts, City of Kingston documents)
  - Site visits (dress warmly)
  - Mapping (current and archival)
  - Drawing
  - Scale models
  - In-class consultations with instructor
  - Critiques with external critics
There will be minimal use of PowerPoint presentations so students will be expected to take notes during class and participate in class discussions. Course materials include two mandatory course texts, as well as a notebook and sketchbook. Students will be expected to undertake field work outside of class time as well as participate in activities in class.

The course textbooks are “The Urban Design Reader” (Larice and Macdonald eds., 2013, second edition) and “Dynamic Urban Design (von Hausen, 2013). Both are required texts. They are available in paperback editions at the Campus Bookstore or via online book sellers. Each week, students will be assigned to review the week’s readings with the class, and lead the in-class discussion.

Individual and group work will be required to cover deliverables for Part 1, 2 and 3. Details of requirements for course assignments are found in Appendix A. Standard University regulations for academic study are found in Appendix B.

The coursework involves case studies in downtown Kingston that are part of an exciting project that is currently underway. The North King’s Town Secondary Plan is currently being prepared by a consulting team retained by the City (full disclosure: I am a member of that team). Documents relating to the North King’s Town Secondary Plan project area will be key to your work and include:

- https://www.cityofkingston.ca/documents/10180/12431730/NKT+Comm.+Inv.+%26+Background+Report+%28FINAL+with+maps+and+appendices%29.pdf/4435709c-1b7c-4618-abfc-ece0502eac69

The design guideline work within the course will be an opportunity to use the City of Kingston’s urban design guidelines:

Part One: Introduction to Urban Design

This part of the course establishes the theoretical and methodological basis for the design work in the rest of the course. Part one emphasizes individual and small group assignments as well as discussion of readings involving the whole class.
**Week 1**

**Week 1: (January 9): What is Community (Urban) Design?**

- Examples from current practice
- First principles of urban design
- Good and bad examples

Introduction to the local case study:

- North King’s Town Secondary Plan area
  - History of development
  - Current conditions
  - Issues to be resolved
  - Development opportunities

- Assignment of working groups
  - Selection of 5 research groups: a) history, b) current built form, c) land uses/local business profile, d) demographics/local social portrait, e) existing/draft OP policies and ZBL provisions

**Readings for Week 2: theoretical and empirical foundations:**

- Von Hausen: Chapters 1-3
- Moudon “A Catholic Approach to Organizing What Urban Designers Should Know” (pp. 235-257)
- Oldenburg “The Problem of Place in America” (pp. 285-295)

**Assignment #1**: Describe your favourite street, using the format described in Appx. A (3-page paper with image of street and copy of same to be posted on wall of work room, with student name: 10%, due in Week 2)

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**Week 2**

**Week 2: (January 16): Seeing and Sensing Place**

- Theories of place
  - Review of readings

- Introduction to site analysis
  - Learning to see (ideas applied to Kingston)
  - Layers of history and meaning (Goad’s atlas, historic air photos)
  - Current constraints and opportunities in everyday places

- Walking tour of downtown Kingston
  - Guided tour of Lower Princess Street via Sydenham Ward
Readings for Week 3: Place theory and experience 1:

- Von Hausen: Chapter 4 and Appendix A (sections 1-3)
- J. Jacobs “Author’s Introduction” and “The Use of Sidewalks” (pp. 139-151)
- A. Jacobs and Appleyard “Toward an Urban Design Manifesto” (pp. 218-228)
- Lynch “Dimensions of Performance’ (pp. 229-234)

Assignment #2: Prepare a community profile of the local study area, based on research and site analysis, incorporating the results of each study group’s work, and showing precedents (5-8 pages of text with illustrations: 20% due Week 4)

Week 3: (January 23): Planning Place 1

- Planning in downtown fringes
  - SWOT analysis

- Portrait of the study area
  - Preliminary comments from 5 research groups

- Planning for whom?
  - Identify “clients”, range of needs to be addressed

- Planning with character
  - Area character statement and character defining elements

- Planning principles
  - Sustainability
  - Inclusivity
  - Flexibility
  - (Others)

- Objectives
  - Land uses
  - Public realm
  - Socio-economic makeup
  - Environmental

Readings for Week 4: Place theory and experience 2

- Von Hausen: Chapter 6
- Berman “The Family of Eyes” and “The Mire of the Macadam” (pp. 25-34)
- Ellin “Themes of Postmodern Urbanism” (pp. 332-343)
- Bentley “Profit and Place” (pp. 459-474)
Week 4:

Week 4: (January 30): Planning Place 2

- In-class review of the North King’s Town Visioning Study
- Translating plans into designs
- Study area urban form
  - Map session
- Review of potential case study sites within the study area
  - Map session
- Choice of case studies
  - Selection of one of 5 Secondary Plan study sub-areas
- Assignment #2 due in class

Readings for Week 5: City form 1

- Von Hausen: Chapters 5 and 7
- Lynch “The Image of the Environment” and “The City Image and Its Elements” (pp. 125-138)
- Cullen “Introduction to the Concise Townscape” (pp. 118-124)

Part Two: Design of Case Study Area

This part of the course involves small group work focusing on designing their specific sub-area. Readings will support in-class design sessions. The instructor will give short introductions to each unit, followed by time spent advising each work group.
Week 5: (February 6): Designing Places 1

Streets and blocks: pattern and grain
- Figure/ground analysis
- Air photo analysis
- Lotting pattern/street pattern
  - Map session
- Opportunities and constraints with current street and block pattern
  - Drawing session

Readings for Week 6: City form 2
- Von Hausen: Chapter 8
- Congress for the New Urbanism “Charter of the New Urbanism” (pp. 328-331)

Week 6: (February 13) Designing Places 2

Streets and blocks: land use and density
- Existing Official Plan policies and Zoning By-law requirements
- Development criteria in draft Official Plan policies/UD Guidelines
- Development criteria in readings
- Application to study area sites
  - Map session

Readings for Week 7: City form 3
- Von Hausen: Chapter 11
- Kelbaugh “Critical Regionalism: An Architecture of Place” (pp. 296-306)

[Reading Week includes February 20]

Week 7: (February 27): Designing Places 3

Built form: massing, design and land uses
- Development criteria for end users
- Built form precedents and local architectural vernacular
  - Model session
Readings for Week 8: City form 4

- Von Hausen: Chapter 12
- Jacobs “Conclusion: Great Streets and City Planning” (pp. 214-217)

Week 8: (March 6): Designing Places 4

Public realm 1: streetscapes
- Design criteria for great streets
- Components of streetscapes
  - Model session

Readings for Week 9: City form 5

- Von Hausen: Chapter 16
- Crawford “Introduction” “Preface: The Current State of Everyday Urbanism” and “Blurring the Boundaries: Public Space and Private Life” (pp. 344-357)

Week 9: (March 13): Designing Places 5

Public realm 2: parks and squares
- Design criteria for the public realm
- Components of parks and squares
  - Map session

Readings for Week 10: Design briefs

- Von Hausen: Chapter 14
- Punter “Design Guidelines in American Cities: Conclusions” (pp. 601-617)

Week 10: (March 20): Designing Places 6

Putting it all together 1: urban design plan/site brief
- Describing what you want
- Components of an urban design plan
  - Design reviews
Readings for Week 11: Feasibility testing

- Von Hausen: Appendix B
- Beatley “Planning for Sustainability in European Cities: A Review of Practice in Leading Cities” (pp. 558-568)

Week 11: (March 27): Designing Places 7

Putting it all together 2: feasibility testing

- Implementing plans and designs
  - Review of designs in light of Part 1 analysis

- Development feasibility analysis
  - Current market trends
  - Local land prices
  - Neighbourhood character
  - Local and City-wide planning policies for area
  - Access, parking, sidewalk width
  - Building type constraints

- Development/design briefs for case study sites
  - In-class design reviews of each case study area

- Workshop planning for Week 12
  - Format
  - Media
  - Presentation content/roles

Readings for Week 12: Urban design practice

- Von Hausen: Chapter 17
- Sorkin “The End(s) of Urban Design” (pp. 618-634)
- Greenberg “A Third Way for Urban Design” (pp. 635-639)
Part Three: Assessing Designs

The final part of the course is a critique of the proposed designs and a final report.

Week 12: (April 3): Wrap Up: Design Workshop/Presentation

- In-class summary and review of readings (pre-workshop)
- Workshop with invited critics, including, for example:
  - Architect
  - Residential/commercial landowner/developer
  - City planning staff (land use/policy, heritage, urban design)
  - Neighbourhood business person
  - Neighbourhood social agency representative
  - Neighbourhood resident (representative of Swamp Ward neighbourhood group)
  - Invited faculty (SURP and others)
- Discussion led by each case study group:
  - Development/design brief for each site
  - Critique of each by invited panel, rest of class
- Summary of development/design opportunities and constraints for study area

Presentation: 30%. Final group reports due April 20: 25%
APPENDIX A: Assignment Descriptions and Requirements

As this is a graduate level course, it is expected that all students are performing at a first-class level. It is also expected that students will have completed any assigned readings and will be engaged in the in-class discussions. Students must demonstrate in both their writings and oral presentations their skills of academic research and critical thinking.

You will have a total of three assignments to submit for SURP 848. One will be an individual assignment and two will be group assignments. You also have a participation mark that reflects contributions in class. When combined with the various in-class activities, these assignments have been designed to help you develop a critical understanding of community design practice and theory. Remember: quality is more important than quantity within your assignments – a well written and argued short paper is better than a rushed long paper!

ASSIGNMENT #1
Individual (10%)

A Great Street

In a short essay (approx. 750 words), describe your favorite street. Explain why it is so successful functionally and aesthetically, what you like about it, and describe the specific elements of the place that make it your favorite. You can include photos and/or drawings of your street in your essay. Feel free to be creative in your description and to draw on both historical and contemporary references to your place (if available).

Late Penalty: 10% per day (weekend counts as 2 days)

ASSIGNMENT #2
Group (20%)

Secondary Plan Studies Assessment

There are two studies informing the preparation of the North Kings Town Secondary Plan. From the Background Study, choose one from either of these chapter groupings:
- Demographics and statistics; land use; brownfields; transportation; and servicing
- Review of policies and studies; cultural heritage and archaeology; natural heritage; parks and trails; and social services and public facilities.

Students will choose one each and write a critical academic paper on it, summarizing the key components that would affect community design guidelines. Check with your classmates to ensure that there is no duplication.

Graphics and illustrations should be included where appropriate. The paper should be approximately 2000 words in length.

Late Penalty: 10% per day (weekend counts as 2 days)
ASSIGNMENT #3
Group (55%)
Sub-area Design Guidelines and Design

In groups of 5 (half first year, half second year), use the City of Kingston Design Guidelines for Communities and for Residential Lots and the course text (Dynamic Urban Design) to help you prepare urban design guidelines for one of the five sub-areas shown in the Visioning Study. This will include an overall design brief summarizing the planning and design principles, followed by general design guidelines for each of the topics in the guidelines (natural environment, parks and open space; community design; streets; parking as well as the residential/mixed use guidelines). Use the checklists in the appendices of both documents for review as you go.

For this assignment, your group will focus on your choice of sub-area.

There are three expected products for this assignment.

1) **In class work:** As a group, for the majority of the term, within your group you will discuss each of the topic areas and explore design options using sketches in plan, elevation and perspective.

2) **In-class presentation:** Each group will present their urban design plan for their sub-area in a 20-minute presentation based on their research and analysis. The other group and the invited audience will have the opportunity to ask questions and make comments on the presentation. It is strongly recommended that the groups have, at a minimum, a draft of their final report completed in time for this presentation. The presentation will be worth 30% of the 55% for the project; and,

3) **Final report:** Each group will prepare a finalized urban design plan for their sub-area, summarizing the in-class work and your presentation, and focusing specifically on the following aspects:
   - Context (historical, environmental, social, economic, etc. summarizing assignments 2 and 3)
   - Natural environment
   - Parks and open space
   - Community design
   - Streets and parking
   - Residential/mixed use design principles
   - General design considerations
   - Site design and building orientation
   - Built form, height and massing
   - Building features and detailing
   - Access and outdoor space

   The report, worth 25%, must include plans, illustrations of the proposed plan as well as mapping and photographs of the sub-area.

**Late Penalty:** 10% per day (weekend counts as 2 days)
In-Class Participation (15%)
Throughout Term

Class participation is an important component of a graduate course. The assessment of a student's participation will be based not only on attendance, but also the quality of the contribution. Students reviewing the weekly readings will be contributing to their individual marks.
APPENDIX B: ACADEMIC REGULATIONS

This material is copyrighted and is for the sole use of students registered in SURP 848: Community Design Winter Term 2017-18. This material shall not be distributed or disseminated to anyone other than students registered in SURP 848: Community Design Winter Term 2017-18. Failure to abide by these conditions is a breach of copyright, and may also constitute a breach of academic integrity under the University Senate’s Academic Integrity Policy Statement.

STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is constituted by the five core fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility (see www.academicintegrity.org). These values are central to the building, nurturing and sustaining of an academic community in which all members of the community will thrive. Adherence to the values expressed through academic integrity forms a foundation for the "freedom of inquiry and exchange of ideas” essential to the intellectual life of the University (see the Senate Report on Principles and Priorities http://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senateandtrustees/principlespriorities.html).

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the regulations concerning academic integrity and for ensuring that their assignments conform to the principles of academic integrity. Information on academic integrity is available in the Arts and Science Calendar (see Academic Regulation 1 http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academic-calendars/regulations/academic-regulations/regulation-1), on the Arts and Science website (see http://www.queensu.ca/artsci/academics/undergraduate/academic-integrity), and from the instructor of this course. Departures from academic integrity include plagiarism, use of unauthorized materials, facilitation, forgery and falsification, and are antithetical to the development of an academic community at Queen’s. Given the seriousness of these matters, actions which contravene the regulation on academic integrity carry sanctions that can range from a warning or the loss of grades on an assignment to the failure of a course to a requirement to withdraw from the university.

COPYRIGHT OF COURSE MATERIALS

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Students may not create audio recordings of classes with the exception of those students requiring an accommodation for a disability, who should speak to the instructor prior to beginning to record lectures. Students creating unauthorized audio recording of lectures violate an instructor’s intellectual property rights and the Canadian Copyright Act.

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

Queen’s University is committed to achieving full accessibility for persons with disabilities. Part of this commitment includes arranging academic accommodations for students with disabilities to ensure they have an equitable opportunity to participate in all of their academic activities. If you are a student with a disability and think you may need accommodations, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Disability Services Office (DSO) and register as early as possible. For more information, including important deadlines, please visit the DSO website at: http://www.queensu.ca/hcds/ds/
COURSE EVALUATION

In this course, some components will be graded using numerical percentage marks. Other components will receive letter grades, which for purposes of calculating your course average will be translated into numerical equivalents using the Faculty of Arts and Science approved scale:

*Arts & Science Letter Grade Input Scheme*

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<th>Numerical value for calculation of final mark</th>
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<td>D+</td>
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Your course average will then be converted to a final letter grade according to Queen’s Official Grade Conversion Scale:

### Queen's Official Grade Conversion Scale

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**LATE POLICY**

If you anticipate having difficulty completing your assignments, you must talk to the instructor as soon as possible. Extensions are not given without good reason. All requests for extensions must be made by email. Otherwise, late penalties for assignments are applied. Penalties are indicated in the assignment descriptions.

**ACCOMMODATION: ACCESS + DISABILITY**

Students requiring disability accommodation must notify the instructor as soon as possible. Students are requested to provide the course director with official documentation from the Health, Counselling and Disability Services at Queen’s ideally at the start of the semester so that accommodation arrangements can be made in an effective, sensitive, and timely manner. For more information on roles and responsibilities regarding accommodation please refer to: [http://www.queensu.ca/hcds/ds/students/index.html](http://www.queensu.ca/hcds/ds/students/index.html)

Should you acquire a temporary disability due to injury or other circumstances, please approach the instructor and provide the documentation from Health Counselling and Disability Services at Queen’s required for the provision of accommodation. However, if you cannot obtain documentation, with good reason, and have associated concerns please do not hesitate to contact the instructor or your teaching assistant. We are here to facilitate your learning. The instructor deeply appreciates receiving as much advance notice as possible regarding the accommodation you require so that appropriate arrangements can be made.