ARCH 558: Fundamentals of Placemaking: Visioning, Designing, Representing
Units: 2
Term – Fall 2019
Day - Thursday
Time: 7:00 p.m. to 8:50 p.m.

Location: WAH B7

Instructor: Vinayak Bharne
Office Hours: Monday & Friday, between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
Contact Info: Email: bharne@usc.edu; Phone: 323-252-7145; Skype: vinayak.bharne; Timeline for replying to emails/calls: within 48 hours

Teaching Assistant: None

Course Description

This course is aimed at exposing graduate students in the Heritage Conservation (and other) disciplines with no previous design background, or architecture degree, to the foundational ideas and basic skills of urban design and place-making.

Specifically this course will overview some of the most dominant theories of urban design and their respective interface with various graphic means of representing a designed landscape and/or place.

Using the USC campus as study area, this course will teach students to read the built environment as a physical setting of identifiable elements each having specific dimensions and characteristics, and their combination into complex larger wholes.

Finally, this course will engage students in design exercises involving strategic thinking on what to preserve, what to change and what to introduce new and why.

Learning Objectives and Outcomes

(1) Create awareness on various contemporary positions and lenses for reading the built environment.

(2) Develop a basic understanding of the physical components of the urban landscape and their dimensional characteristics – from the scale of the region to that of a street.

(3) Develop a basic understanding of how to represent in two and three-dimensions, the basic physical components of an urban landscape – from trees to building typologies – and how to depict them.

(4) Engage in basic place-making exercises that analyze conditions towards proposing transformation and change.

Prerequisite(s): Students should not have/should not be pursuing a parallel architecture degree
Co-Requisite(s): None
**Concurrent Enrollment:** None  
**Recommended Preparation:** None

**Course Notes**

The course will be structured around weekly 30 minute powerpoint lectures and 15 minute reading discussions on various theories and positions, followed by 1 hour in-class exercises on their related representation ideas.

There will be a mid-term and final review for this course.

Copies of lecture slides and other class information will be posted on Blackboard, or sent to students via email on a weekly basis.

**Technological Proficiency and Hardware/Software Required**

Students are expected to have basic graphic and softwares such as ADOBE. 3d modeling softwares are encouraged. WORD or other text software is essential.

**Required Readings and Supplementary Materials**

At the beginning of the class, the instructor will hand out a pdf binder of selected readings that will be used during the semester.

**Description and Assessment of Assignments**

Mid Term assignment: This will be a group assignment. This assignment will focus on refining the first 4 in-class exercises in the form of refined presentation drawings. Each group will detail and polish the drawings of the 4 exercises with sufficient detail and further on-site observation. Students will present these drawings as Powerpoint slides and defend their observations and representations in front of an invited jurys.

This assignment will be due on October 10, 2019.

Final assignment: This will also be a group assignment. Each team will refine their specific study area proposal as an integral part of a larger master plan for the USC campus. Each team will demonstrate to the jury the changes they made to their previous versions after they were combined with the other study areas. Each team will also show how these decisions were made to ensure better synergy with the work of the other study areas.  

The specific requirement of drawings per team is as follows:

1. A drawing of existing conditions of your study area with a scale  
2. A colored site plan of your proposal to the same scale as #1  
3. 4 clarification diagrams showing various aspects of your proposal – for eg. Parking, Access, Open Space, Pedestrian Paths, Preserved Buildings etc.  
4. A 3-d representation of your proposal – for eg. Massing Model, Freehand Sketch, Computer Rendering, Photo Montage etc.  
5. A 500-word narrative on the main ideas of your proposal

The assignment will be presented as series of posters. Size to be determined in class.

This assignment will be due on December 12, 2019
Grading Breakdown

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid Term</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Responses to Readings</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>10</td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
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Grading Scale (Example)
Course final grades will be determined using the following scale
A   95-100
A-  90-94
B+  87-89
B   83-86
B-  80-82
C+  77-79
C   73-76
C-  70-72
D+  67-69
D   63-66
D-  60-62
F   59 and below

Assignment Rubrics
None

Assignment Submission Policy
Mid Term and Final assignments each must be submitted as a SINGLE pdf file (no multiple sheets) 8.5 x 11 size portrait. There is no limit to page numbers.

They should be submitted in person directly to the Instructor in class on the day of the final exam. Any absences must be excused in writing by the Instructor at least two weeks prior to the final exam.

Grading Timeline
The standard timeline for grading and feedback is 1 week.

Additional Policies
Late assignments will only be accepted within the first 24 hours of the mid term and/or final exam. Late assignments will be penalized by 1 letter grade.

Instructor will take attendance in each class. Students entering the class beyond the first 15 minutes will be marked absent.

More than two unexcused absences, that is, not being present in the entire class, will be reported to the Program Director.
Course Schedule: A Weekly Breakdown

August 29: Course Overview & Expectations. Selection of Study Areas (from USC Campus), Lecture: Communicating Urbanism – Precedents & Practices

This introductory lecture will overview what effective urban design communication is all about, how various projects and audiences demand different presentation techniques, and what some of the exemplary ideas and cases are in this regard.

September 5: The Anatomy of the City

This lecture will overview the various scales of city design – from the region to the street and their respective anatomies. It will also present an overview of the various basic dimensional conventions of the elements of the public realm. For instance a parking lot is around 60 feet in width; a tree is around 35 feet in diameter; a retail sidewalk is at least 12 feet wide etc.

Discussion on Reading – Three Urbanisms & the Public Realm by Doug Kelbaugh
In-class exercise – Doing a freehand base drawing of your study area to a particular scale

September 12: Building Typology

This lecture will overview the taxonomy of basic building types, encouraging students to understand urban transformation beyond conventional abstract land-use depictions. It will elaborate on the dimensional conventions of these building types – from a typical single family house, to a mixed-use building with residential above street retail.

Discussion on Reading – Explaining Residential Density by John G. Ellis
In-class exercise – Enhancing the drawing of your study area with landscape elements and details

September 19: The Nolli Plan & the Figure Field - Urban Morphology in Two Dimensions

The plan of Rome done by Giovanbattista Nolli circa 1748 – now famous as the ‘Nolli Plan – was a watershed moment in the history of city design communication. It created simultaneously a precise formal survey of the city, as well as a clear depiction of the intricate relationship between the public and private realm. It went on to chart the Figure Field method of depicting and analyzing the urban landscape as a formal web of solids and voids. This lecture will elaborate on the what, why and how of the Nolli Plan and the Figure Field.

Discussion on Reading – The Nolli Map & Urban Theory by Jim Tice
In class exercise – Drawing a Nolli Plan and Figure Field of your study area

September 26: From Ryakuchu Ryakugai to Gordon Cullen - The City as Pictoral Impression

Ryakuchu Ryakugai were sixteenth century mappings of Kyoto, the then capital of Japan, that unlike the morphological precision of the Nolli plan, were impressionist, pictoral depictions of place, people, events and rituals. In circa 1960, British artist and urbanist Gordon Cullen published his landmark book “Townscape,” that also sought to capture British towns through sketches and depictions of public life. Though different in their technique and intent, both are unified in their prioritization of urban experience and life over form. This lecture will analyze the understanding of the city as a fluid rather than a static construct.

Discussion on Reading – Townscape by Gordon Cullen (Introduction, pg. 6-19)
In class exercise – Drawing a sequential set of freehand sketches through your study area
October 3: Kevin Lynch and the City as a Cognitive Map

In the mid-sixties, American sociologist Kevin Lynch wrote “The Image of the City,” an account of a research project carried out in three American cities. The project resulted in the evolution of the concept of legibility, based on five elements which, Lynch contends, people use unconsciously to organize their 'mental maps' of an urban area. The concepts of legibility have proved invaluable as an analytic and design tool. This lecture will discuss the ideas of the Image of the City that helped give rise to a new science of human perception and behavior in the city.

Discussion on Reading – *The Image of the City by Kevin Lynch (The City Image and its Elements, pg. 98-102)*
In class exercise – Drawing a mental map of your study area

October 10: Mid Term Reviews

October 17: Fall Break (no class)

October 24: The Oregon Experiment – City Design as Multiple Scenarios

In the mid-seventies, American urbanist Christopher Alexander wrote “The Oregon Experiment”, outlining the six fundamental principles that guided his planning process for the University of Oregon campus. These principles are organic order, piecemeal growth (or continuous adaptation), patterns, diagnosis, participation, and coordination. These ideas challenged the notion of the frozen master plan, and went on to form the foundations of other books such as “A Pattern Language”, and “A Timeless Way of Building.” This lecture will use the Oregon Experiment to explain the difference between visioning versus strategic planning, and examine the virtues of incremental growth and urban catalyst.

Discussion on Reading – *The Timeless Way of Building by Christopher Alexander (Chapter 24: The Process of Repair, pg. 475-493)*
In class exercise – Drawing a series of infill scenarios for your study area

October 31: Learning From Las Vegas – Mapping a City on its Own Terms

The 1972 book “Learning from Las Vegas” by American architect Robert Venturi et al created a healthy controversy on its appearance in 1972, calling for a greater reception to the tastes and values of "common" people and their expectations of cities – as seen through the lens of Las Vegas. More relevant to this course are its mappings of Las Vegas that sought to capture the sensations and personas of this city on its own terms through less formal and more semantic means. Formal precision was overlaid by analysis of signage, lighting and activity, encouraging one to understand the contemporary city as a case by case phenomenon rather than a generic physical construct.

Discussion on Reading – *Learning From Las Vegas by Robert Venturi et al (Part I, pg. 3-20)*
In class exercise – Drawing a signage/navigation drawing of your study area

November 7: Smart Growth, New Urbanism and its Representations

This establishment of the New Urbanism movement represents the crystallization of two generations of challenging the ideologies of the Modern movement, as well as revival of the traditional understanding of cities as shaped, figural and pedestrian-scaled artifacts. More relevant to this course are New Urbanism’s concurrent revival of numerous traditional means of representing cities. This lecture will overview the fundamental ideas of the Charter of the New Urbanism (in comparison with its predecessor, the CIAM Charter,) and elaborate their representational propensities – from Regulating and Illustrative Plans to Form-Based Code and Perspective Renderings.
Discussion on Reading – *The CIAM Charter (pg. 6-10); Charter of the New Urbanism (full document – 4 pages)*
In-class exercise – Drawing a New Urbanist Illustrative Plan of your study area showing one of your scenarios

**November 14: Beyond Three-Dimensional Representation - Mapping the City in Flux**

New media tools have expanded the mapping of the city beyond three dimensions into the fourth dimension of TIME. Time-lapse photography, and video images allow the city to be seen in real time rather than a constructed depiction. What are the merits and limitations of these techniques? Where are they most applicable? How does one create effective presentations with them?

Discussion on Reading – *Beyond Form: The City as Flux by Aseem Inam*
*The Kinetic City: Emerging Urbanism in India by Rahul Mehrotra*
In-class exercise – Mapping people and activity in your study area

**November 21: In-Class Visioning Exercise**

Discussion on Reading – *Whatever Happened to Urbanism by Rem Koolhas*
In class exercise - All groups and proposals for various study areas will be brought together to examine their combined possibility and promise. We will together identify overlaps and conflicts and create a menu of edits and changes to be studied further.

**November 28: Thanksgiving Break (No Class)**

**December 5: Final Assignment Mock Reviews (no external jury)**

**December 12: Final Assignment Reviews (with external jury)**

**Statement on Academic Conduct and Support Systems**

**Academic Conduct:**

Plagiarism – presenting someone else’s ideas as your own, either verbatim or recast in your own words – is a serious academic offense with serious consequences. Please familiarize yourself with the discussion of plagiarism in SCampus in Part B, Section 11, “Behavior Violating University Standards” [policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b](http://policy.usc.edu/scampus-part-b). Other forms of academic dishonesty are equally unacceptable. See additional information in SCampus and university policies on scientific misconduct, [policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct](http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct).

**Support Systems:**

*Student Health Counseling Services* - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call [engemannhs.sc.usc.edu/counseling](http://engemannhs.sc.usc.edu/counseling)
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention.

*National Suicide Prevention Lifeline* - 1 (800) 273-8255 – 24/7 on call [suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://suicidepreventionlifeline.org)
Free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 – 24/7 on call
genemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm.

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED) | Title IX - (213) 740-5086
equity.usc.edu, titleix.usc.edu
Information about how to get help or help a survivor of harassment or discrimination, rights of protected
classes, reporting options, and additional resources for students, faculty, staff, visitors, and applicants. The
university prohibits discrimination or harassment based on the following protected characteristics: race,
color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation,
age, physical disability, medical condition, mental disability, marital status, pregnancy, veteran status,
genetic information, and any other characteristic which may be specified in applicable laws and
governmental regulations.

Bias Assessment Response and Support - (213) 740-2421
studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support
Avenue to report incidents of bias, hate crimes, and microaggressions for appropriate investigation and response.

The Office of Disability Services and Programs - (213) 740-0776
dsp.usc.edu
Support and accommodations for students with disabilities. Services include assistance in providing
readers/notetakers/interpreters, special accommodations for test taking needs, assistance with
architectural barriers, assistive technology, and support for individual needs.

USC Support and Advocacy - (213) 821-4710
studentaffairs.usc.edu/ssa
Assists students and families in resolving complex personal, financial, and academic issues adversely
affecting their success as a student.

Diversity at USC - (213) 740-2101
diversity.usc.edu
Information on events, programs and training, the Provost’s Diversity and Inclusion Council, Diversity
Liaisons for each academic school, chronology, participation, and various resources for students.

USC Emergency - UPC: (213) 740-4321, HSC: (323) 442-1000 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu, emergency.usc.edu
Emergency assistance and avenue to report a crime. Latest updates regarding safety, including ways in
which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible.

USC Department of Public Safety - UPC: (213) 740-6000, HSC: (323) 442-120 – 24/7 on call
dps.usc.edu
Non-emergency assistance or information.

Bibliography & References

Alexander Christopher, The Timeless Way of Building

Charter of the New Urbanism

CIAM Charter
Cullen Gordon, *The Concise Townscape*

Ellis John G., “Explaining Residential Density”, *Places* 16:2


Koolhas Rem, “Whatever Happened to Urbanism”

Lynch Kevin, *The Image of the City*

Mehrotra Rahul, “The Kinetic City as Ephemeral Urbanism,” *Ephemeral Urbanism: Cities in Constant Flux*

Venturi Robert et al, *Learning From Las Vegas*