ARCH 561  Urbanism Themes and Case-Studies

Units: 2.0  
Term: Fall 2019  
Timing: Fri 12:00-1:50pm  
Location: HAR 101  
Instructor: Faiza Moatasim  
Office Hours: Tue 2:00-3:00pm & by appointment in Watt 304  
Contact Info: moatasim@usc.edu  
Class Assts: Bettina Brown (bettinab@usc.edu)  
Aira Kariah Iglesias (agiglesi@usc.edu)  
Joepaul Luikart (luikart@usc.edu)

A Contemporary City of Three Million People (Unbuilt). 1922. Architect: Le Corbusier

Unequal Scenes, Mumbai (India). 2016. Photographer: Johnny Miller
Course Description

What do our cities tell us about us, our values and belief systems, our modes of occupation, and our relationships with each other? What are the differences between imagining the city as an artifact, as a palimpsest, and as a social, economic, and political entity? What characteristics, viewpoints, and moments take precedence over others in the analysis of a city? This course will present an understanding of urbanism and urbanization from a global perspective by focusing on how cities have developed in dynamic relationships with various social, political, and economic forces across time and space. In particular, the course will show how the form of a city symbolizes dominant cultural values, how the nature of work determines the organization of a city, and how the income and race of people regulate their access to urban space. Ultimately, the course will pursue what we learn about our present and possibly future urban conditions from an understanding of history and theory of urbanism and urbanization.

The course will be structured around key themes and moments in urban history to highlight how sophisticated urban patterns have existed in periods that may be categorized as ‘ancient’ or ‘medieval,’ or in societies that are considered ‘traditional.’ The course will also focus on both ‘ordinary’ and ‘extraordinary’ patterns of urban development that have emerged in different parts of the world. In the context of a city, these include monumental spaces and pedigreed planning paradigms associated with power and privilege, and everyday spaces of poverty and resourcefulness. These monumental and everyday spaces collectively represent how those with or without power influence and interact with the form of a city. The first part of the course will establish a fundamental visual and theoretical vocabulary of the range of physical forms that cities can take using examples from Mesopotamia to Mumbai to demonstrate continuity and disruption of urban ordering processes separated across time and space. The second part of the course will explore the development of cities in response to changing conceptions of work, residence, leisure, and communication, which have contributed to particular forms of political and economic domination in urban settings since the eighteenth century. The final part of the course will explore the concept of the city as a right that is mostly denied to the vast majority of urban dwellers around the world but that can be reclaimed through strategic spatial practices, and design agendas.

Learning Objectives

This course offers:

1. an overview of how cities have developed in the past, what attempts have been made to improve urban life and for whom;
2. an understanding of the tools and vocabularies necessary to read and analyze global urban forms;
3. an appreciation of certain social, economic, and political conditions such as, poverty, inequality, capitalism, modernism, industrialism, colonialism and neoliberalism as important urban processes.

Required Readings

All Required readings will be available on Blackboard under “Content.”

Course Requirements

There are four main components of grading and evaluation for this course:

1. Participation in class discussions (10% of total grade)
   a. This is a lecture- and discussion-based course. We will explore important urbanism themes in this course by discussing assigned readings in class, either as a whole or in
small groups. Your verbal participation in each class session will be evaluated for relevance and content.

b. To prepare for participation in class discussions, it is essential that you come to the class having done the assigned readings. You must do so by engaging with the weekly text, that is, by identifying the section/s of the assigned reading that relates directly to the main argument of the scholar as well as look for evidence used to support scholarly claims. You should also take note of key terms and concepts discussed in the readings or lectures. Finally it is important that you find connections between different readings as well as develop your own questions based on the claims made by scholars whose work you will be encountering in this course.

2. **Short Exercises (30% of total grade)**
   a. **Exercise #1 (10%)**: Analyze the physical form, function, and meaning of an undeclared city based on its maps, and your conceptual understanding of similar urban forms encountered in the course.
   b. **Exercise #2 (20%)**: This is a two-stage assignment based on the claim that *cities are sites of social inequalities*.
      a. Capture an image (sketch, photograph, collage) of an instance of unequal social relations in Los Angeles or another familiar city. List your criteria for the identified urban condition of social inequality and include a caption appropriate to the captured image.
      b. In no more than 250 words, propose an urban intervention that can make the identified condition more inclusive and equitable. Your response could adapt inspirations for achieving urban inclusivity from other cities. All external ideas must be properly cited.

3. **Pop Quizzes (10% of the total grade)**
   Pop quizzes will be designed to gauge your understanding of important themes in the assigned readings or in class documentaries

4. **Midterm Quiz (20% of total grade)**

5. **Final Exam (30% of total grade)**
   The midterm and final exams will be designed to gauge your understanding of important places, and theoretical concepts about urbanism introduced in the course. The midterm and final exams will be in the form of short answer, and identification questions.

**Grading Breakdown**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>% of Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Exercises</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop Quizzes</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assignment Submission Policy
- Assignments submitted late, if passing, will receive half credit for the grade received. No late work will be accepted 10 days after the due date.
- All requirements must be met to earn a passing grade.

General Policies
- Class attendance is mandatory.
- Absence without penalty is allowed only in exceptional situations related to personal and family emergencies. Please discuss the reason for missing class with me immediately after the event to determine if it qualifies as an emergency.

Special Accommodations
If you are facing any difficulty with your course work, please speak with me immediately. If you need special accommodations because of a documented disability as allowed by the Office of Disability Services and Programs, please discuss your needs with me no later than the end of the second week of classes.

Course Schedule

W1. Aug 30th 2019  Urbanism and Urbanization – An Introduction

PART I  URBAN PATTERNS IN HISTORY

W2. Sep 6th 2019  Organic Patterns

W3. Sep 13th 2019  Nonorganic Patterns: Grid

W4. Sep 20th 2019  Nonorganic Patterns: Radial and Concentric

Short exercise 1

PART 2  THE CITY AS A SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL ENTITY

W5. Sep 27th 2019  Urban Societies
In class screening  Play Time, Jacques Tati (1967); Modern Times, Charles Chaplin (1936)

In class screening  Metropolis, Fritz Lang (1926)

W7. Oct 11th 2019  Midterm Quiz

Oct 18th 2019  Fall Recess


W9. Nov 1st 2019:  The Urbanization of Poverty


Short exercise 2 due in class

W11. Nov 15th 2019:  Globalization and Information Technology

PART 3  THE CITY AS A RIGHT

W12. Nov 22nd 2019:  Environmental Justice

Nov 29th 2019  Thanksgiving Holiday

Reading  Michel de Certeau, Practice of Everyday Life, 91-130
In class screening  Urbanized, Gary Hustwit (2011)

Dec 13th 2019  Final Exam
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” https://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, http://policy.usc.edu/scientific-misconduct.

Support Systems
Student Counseling Services (SCS) - (213) 740-7711 – 24/7 on call
Free and confidential mental health treatment for students, including short-term psychotherapy, group counseling, stress fitness workshops, and crisis intervention. https://engemannshc.usc.edu/counseling/

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline - 1-800-273-8255
Provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention Services (RSVP) - (213) 740-4900 - 24/7 on call
Free and confidential therapy services, workshops, and training for situations related to gender-based harm. https://engemannshc.usc.edu/rsvp/

Sexual Assault Resource Center
For more information about how to get help or help a survivor, rights, reporting options, and additional resources, visit the website: http://sarc.usc.edu/

Office of Equity and Diversity (OED)/Title IX Compliance – (213) 740-5086
Works with faculty, staff, visitors, applicants, and students around issues of protected class. https://equity.usc.edu/

Bias Assessment Response and Support
Incidents of bias, hate crimes and microaggressions need to be reported allowing for appropriate investigation and response. https://studentaffairs.usc.edu/bias-assessment-response-support/

The Office of Disability Services and Programs
Provides certification for students with disabilities and helps arrange relevant accommodations. http://dsp.usc.edu

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

Diversity at USC
Information on events, programs and training, the Diversity Task Force (including representatives for each school), chronology, participation, and various resources for students. https://diversity.usc.edu/

USC Emergency Information
Provides safety and other updates, including ways in which instruction will be continued if an officially declared emergency makes travel to campus infeasible, http://emergency.usc.edu

USC Department of Public Safety – 213-740-4321 (UPC) and 323-442-1000 (HSC) for 24-hour emergency assistance or to report a crime. Provides overall safety to USC community. http://dps.usc.edu
“The city in its complete sense, then, is a geographic plexus, an economic organization, an institutional process, a theater of social action, and an aesthetic symbol of collective unity”

(Lewis Mumford, “What is a City,” 1937: 94)

“The right to the city is far more than the individual liberty to access urban resources: it is a right to change ourselves by changing the city”

(David Harvey, “The Right to the City,” 2008: 23)