ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY URBAN PLANNING:  
CITY MAKERS IN URBAN DESIGN AND PHYSICAL PLANNING

Department of Urban Planning, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
Students attend two lectures and one discussion session each week.
• Lectures take place every Tuesday and Thursday from 3:45 pm to 4:30 pm (in person) AUP Building Room 110
• Full attendance during all sessions is expected and may be monitored during the class

INSTRUCTORS
Faculty team leader
• Larry Witzling, larry.witzling@graef-usa.com
Teaching assistants
• Natalie Marshall and Sydney Swift
Guest lecturers
• Stephanie Hacker
• Carolyn Esswein
• James Wasley
• Tanya Fonseca
• Danya Littlefield
• Ed Freer
• Alex Halverson
• Brianna Fiorillo
• Dominic Marlow

COURSE COMMUNICATIONS
All questions concerning course should be directed to the Teaching Assistant who leads your discussions section.
Office hours and additional contact information for TAs will be established at the first lecture.

APPROACH TO URBAN PLANNING AS A FIELD OF STUDY
Urban Planning is based on systematic observation and research of human behavior, cultural and physical evolution,
and the organization, development, and consequences of human activity, both past and present, in cities and urban
communities. The practice of urban planning requires the conscious use of skill, talent and creative imagination in the
production of the physical form of cities and their components that address the functional, cultural, environmental and
aesthetic attributes of our communities. This course fits the GER definitions of Social Science (including criteria 1, 2a,
2b, 2d. and 2e) The course also fit some aspects of the GER definitions for Arts and Humanities.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES
This course introduces students to the issues, concepts, and tools for professional city planning. The class provides
students with a broad base of knowledge of the underlying study and practice of city planning.

Part 1- City planners “make” cities by influencing the form of the city. City form constrains and influences opportunities
for human activity. Planners influence the form, and thereby human activity, by planning a community’s visual
character, sustainability and resilience, circulation, social and economic activities, natural environment, and the
operation and maintenance of the city. Students will learn and analyze factors associated with urban form in
different social contexts and historical conditions. Students will learn critical historical, theoretical, and aesthetic
perspectives used to plan urban form and how planning practitioners shape our cities.

Part 2- Once planners understand the form of the city, we can begin to explore how city form influences, and is
influenced by, human activity. Students will learn some of the different methodologies and problem-solving
approaches used for the social decision making process that creates our urban communities.

Part 3- Planners will be facing great challenges over the next decades. How can we make a difference? Students will
begin to explore how they can think critically, analyze urban conditions, and participate in making decisions that
impact our cities and the different social and cultural groups within our urban environments.

LECTURES AND READINGS ARE SEPARATE, INDEPENDENT TRACKS FOR LEARNING
• The lectures focus on the practice of planning and its history based on the expertise of the faculty.
• The readings represent important ideas collected from the vast literature on urban planning. Some readings
overlap lecture material, but they should always be considered independent ideas that students should learn.
WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS (weeks 1-8 and weeks 14-16)
Weekly assignments require you to engage in clear writing, thoughtful analysis, and critical thinking. Assignments require you to demonstrate knowledge and reasoning regarding urban communities, how they function, and how they may be evaluated from a variety of intellectual perspectives.

1. All assignments must be received by your TA by noon, via the web, on the Monday following the assignment.
2. Late assignments will NOT be accepted, and you will receive a grade of F for late assignments.
3. Assignments which are delayed or missing due to problems with email, computer use, technology or internet will NOT be accepted. It is YOUR responsibility to make sure they are received on time.
4. No hard copy submissions. No file formats other than PDF.
5. Essays should be 250-500 words. Requirements for non-essay assignments will be described in class.
6. You are expected to write clearly, spell correctly, and use correct grammar. TAs are not expected to correct your written assignments. If you have difficulty writing you should seek assistance from on-campus resources.

MAJOR PROJECT ASSIGNMENT (weeks 9-13): NEIGHBORHOOD/STREET ANALYSIS PROJECT
In addition to the goals of weekly assignments, the major project assignment requires you to integrate multiple ideas, methods, and issues regarding urban communities. You will select a street, inclusive of its surrounding neighborhood, that you think is a good model for urban planning. Streets and surrounding neighborhoods vary substantially in terms of size and character. It is up to you to define the boundary for the project. You will prepare and conduct a 10-15 minute slide presentation about your selected project in your discussion section. Your analysis should use knowledge from Part 2 of the course. The project must be submitted as a PDF. Your project must follow this outline and format:

1. **Overall framework (2-3 slides)**
   A map and text showing the boundary and critical features of the street and neighborhood. Imagine you are describing your project to strangers who have never visited your street and neighborhood. You might:
   a. Present an **historical analysis** of the development of the neighborhood as your primary framework.
   b. Show **key variables** such as paths, edges, nodes, and landmarks.
   c. Use a **valid** theory or model to describe the area (such as concepts from “new urbanism”, a book or author you like, or a professionally recognized website).
   d. Some combination of the above.

2. **Places and visual character (2-3 slides)**
   This should include text, plans, sections, photos, and elevations of key place(s) in your street/neighborhood. The plans must evaluate a pure **figure/ground** drawing showing the street and neighborhood.

3. **Circulation (2-3 slides)**
   This should include text, diagrams (plans, sections, and/or elevations) showing the circulation of people, goods, and services (both vehicles and pedestrians). It might also discuss the hierarchy of circulation (major and minor routes).

4. **Social and economic activity (2-3 slides)**
   Discuss what activities occur in the street and neighborhood – currently and throughout its history. Talk about differences, changes, and expectations. This too should be shown in text, diagrams and/or photos.

5. **Maintenance, operation, and sustainability (1-2 slides)**
   Discuss how the place is maintained in terms of staff, operations, use of resources and similar factors. Show your knowledge in text, diagrams and/or photos.

6. **Environmental attributes (1-2 slides)**
   Discuss the natural environment. Talk about air, water, utilities, landscape, health and comfort, safety and security, and so forth. Show the information in diagrams (plans, sections, and elevations).

7. **Urban design recommendations (4-5 slides)**
   What would you recommend to local public officials to improve the street and the neighborhood? How might such improvements impact the neighborhood, especially in terms of social and economic attributes?
ASSESSMENT OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Your assignments will be graded based on relevance to the assigned topic, clarity of expression, and demonstration of critical thinking. Students are expected to complete readings and assignments in advance of the discussion and come prepared to take part in discussion. Class participation during discussion sessions will be included in your evaluation.

1. **60% of your grade is based on the sum of grades for weekly essays, each of which is weighted as follows:**
   a. **20% based on relevance to the assigned topic**
      - Does your work: present information from relevant sources; use information coherently and discuss interrelationships to other relevant information; reach reasonable conclusions that reveal important patterns, differences, or similarities among the various elements of the issue being addressed. (This rubric is based, in part, on the “inquiry and analysis” rubric from CGS).
   b. **20% based on clarity of expression**
      - Does your work: use appropriate and relevant content to explore ideas; organize the content effectively; use credible and relevant sources; convey meaning with clarity; avoid distracting errors; reach conclusions that are linked to the content. (This rubric is based, in part, on the “written communication” rubric from CGS).
   c. **20% demonstration of critical thinking**
      - Does your work: question assumptions and conclusions; identify reasonable approaches that would lead to different conclusions; state a clear position and identify how it differs from other recognized positions; tie conclusions to a range of sources; identify strengths and weaknesses in an argument. (This rubric is based, in part, on the “critical thinking” rubric from CGS).

2. **20% of your grade will be based on your grade for the major project using these factors:**
   - Does your project:
     - describe the complex interrelationships of the different variables
     - recognize which elements are clear and which require further study
     - describe how recommendations derive from, and integrate, multiple ideas and interpretation
     - describe options that imply risks and describe those risks
     - reformulate traditional concepts in new ways
     - consider multiple alternatives
     - avoid exaggerated answers and arguments
     - explore ideas without overly opinionated arguments or ideological mandates
   (This rubric is based on the “analyzing complex issues” and the “creative thinking” rubrics from CGS).

3. **20% of your grade will be based on both**
   a. Faculty evaluation of your class participation and attendance.
   b. Unexcused absences will result in grade reductions as follows:
      - 2 unexcused absences = maximum grade of B, grade may be lower based on essays and participation
      - 3 unexcused absences = automatic D, grade may be lower based on essays and participation
      - 4 unexcused absences = automatic F

**EXPECTED TIME INVESTMENT (IN HOURS) FOR 16 WEEKS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours per Week</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lectures</td>
<td>30 @ 1.3 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussions</td>
<td>15 @ 0.8 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly reading</td>
<td>53 @ 3-4 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly assignments</td>
<td>40 @ 3-4 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Major project assignment</td>
<td>16 @ (3-4 hours</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous research and discussion</td>
<td>3 @</td>
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<tr>
<td>No midterm or final exams</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>163</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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**RECOMMENDED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

1. **Collage City** by Colin Rowe and Fred Koetter
2. **Death and Life of Great American Cities** by Jane Jacobs
3. **Great Streets** by Alan Jacobs
4. **City Planning According to Artistic Principles** by Camillo Sitte
5. **Charter of the Congress for the New Urbanism** by the Congress for the New Urbanism
6. **Civic Art** by Werner Hegemann and Elbert Peets
7. **Image of the City** by Kevin Lynch
8. **The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces** by William H. White
CLASS SCHEDULE

**Wk 1**

**Thursday 2-Sept - Witzling**  
Introduction: role of planners in “making” cities – experience from the field  
Readings: chapter on physical planning (Witzling)

**Part 1 – Understanding City Form And How It Is Planned**

2

**Tuesday 7-Sept Witzling**  
Learning the form of cities: maps, plans, learning to read a city – visual literacy

**Thursday 9-Sept Witzling**  
Attitudes toward urban form: changing attitudes by communities and city makers  
Readings: excerpt from the Intellectual vs the City (White)  
Assignment: make a hand drawn map

**3**  
**Tuesday 14-Sept Witzling**  
Example: Macarthur Square - freeways and city form  
**Thursday 15-Sept Witzling**  
Learning the form of cities – grids and networks  
Readings: excerpt from the Architect and the City (J.B. Jackson)  
Assignment: essay – describe form and activity around UWM

4  
**Tuesday 21-Sept Witzling**  
Learning the form of cities – organic forms  
**Thursday 23-Sept Witzling**  
Principles for form –why does it matter; Camillo Sitte part 1  
Readings: excerpt from City Planning According to Artistic Principles, (Sitte)  
Assignment: essay – can a city be a work of art? Or only a place where artists work? Why?

5  
**Tuesday 28-Sept - Witzling**  
Camillo Sitte part 2  
**Thursday 30-Sept TA - Marshall**  
Topic TBD (choosing planning as a career path)  
Readings: excerpt from American City Planning Since 1890 (Mel Scott)  
Assignment: essay – after the period Mel Scott called “the spirit of reform”, what issues, attitudes and ideas seem to be the same, which seem to be different, and why?

6  
**Tuesday 5-Oct Witzling**  
The City Beautiful and the Congress for the New Urbanism  
**Thursday 7-Oct TA - Swift**  
Topic TBD (What is the role of urban designers vs. architects vs. planners?)  
Readings: excerpt from the Death and Life of Great American Cities (Jane Jacobs)  
Assignment: essay: describe the good, the bad, and/or the ugly of Wisconsin cities and justify your opinion

7  
**Tuesday 12-Oct Witzling**  
Public places – the street – the Stroget  
**Thursday 14-Oct Witzling**  
Topic to be determined  
Readings: an RFP (to be distributed in class)  
Assignment: essay – outline the major ideas you would emphasize in the rfp ‘approach’ and explain why you think it would be a successful proposal

8  
**Tuesday 19-Oct Witzling**  
Public places –theories and methods (Colin Rowe, Chris Alexander, Kevin Lynch)  
**Thursday 21 – Oct Hacker**  
Welcome to the block – who really makes the city?  
Readings: TBD  
Assignment: TBD
Part 2 – Making Communities

9 Tuesday 26-Oct Littlefield
Why is community engagement important, models of participation, nimbly-ism, “right” to the city?
Thursday 28-Oct - Fonseca
Who improves the neighborhood and the city?
Readings: TBD
Assignment: Begin major project

10 Tuesday 2-Nov - Littlefield
What data do professionals and community members use to understand the city, and how does this impact the design of cities?
Thursday 4-Nov - Esswein
CDS and the role of students and faculty in making cities
Readings: TBD
Assignment: Continue major project

11 Tuesday 9-Nov - Freer
Placemaking and design for public spaces
Thursday 11-Nov – Wasley
Sustainability, poetics, and urban planning
Readings: TBD
Assignment: Continue major project

12 Tuesday 16-Nov Halverson
Resiliency, business, and urban planning
Thursday 18-Nov Fiorillo
Communicating "Resiliency" and "Climate Change" in time to make a difference
Readings: TBD
Assignment: Continue major project

13 Tuesday 23-Nov Marlow
The Costs and Benefits of Flood Prevention
Thursday 25 – thanksgiving
Readings: TBD
Assignment: ALL major projects to be submitted – first week of project presentations

Part 3 – Can collaboration work?

Objectives (d) demonstrate the ability to identify, apply and effectively communicate methodologies designed for conducting inquiry into human behavior, collective action, societies, or cultures; or

14 Tuesday 30-Nov Class panel
EVs and AVs and more parking – nothing seems to work
Thursday 2-Dec Class panel
Everything is "partisan" – nothing seems to work
Readings: Last week in social media and the City
Assignment: Second week of project presentations

15 Tuesday 7-Dec Class panel
Hot, dry, and nowhere to go - nothing seems to work
Thursday 9-Dec faculty panel
What should planners do in your lifetime?
Readings: you decide
Assignment: end of the maze -- top ten ways to find solutions

16 Tuesday 14-Dec– Faculty panel TBD
ADDITIONAL POLICIES

Additional policies are stated by the Secretary of the University at this website:
www4.uwm.edu/secu
https://uwm.edu/cetl/covid-19-syllabus-statements/

Panther Community Health and Safety Standards: UWM has implemented reasonable health and safety protocols, taking into account recommendations by local, state and national public health authorities, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As a member of our campus community, you are expected to abide by the Panther Interim COVID-Related Health & Safety Rules, which were developed in accordance with public health guidelines. These standards apply to anyone who is physically present on campus, UWM grounds, or participating in a UWM-sponsored activity:

- All individuals visiting UWM facilities must wear face coverings while indoors;
- Unvaccinated students coming to campus are required to test weekly for COVID-19; and,
- You should check daily for COVID-19 symptoms and not come to campus if you are feeling sick.

Additional details about student and staff expectations can be found on the UWM COVID-19 webpage.