Course Overview

The aim of this course is to build students’ multi-disciplinary understanding of the urban environment and its relationships within the political, economic, ecological and cultural context. In this abbreviated course, the focus will be on introduction to terms, tools and systems, survey of historical and contemporary examples, and finally broad perspective analysis of urban development theories.

Working from the particular to the general, the class will begin with a survey of the components that make up a city — the parts and pieces, structures and systems that combine to make urban space. An introduction of the regulatory and administrative organizational regimes that control development will follow. In this section, New Orleans will be used as the principal object of study. The second part will be a cursory survey of contemporary urban place making theories and other conceptual underpinnings that will introduce other metropolitan centers national and international. The concluding part will require the class to make a close reading of chosen sections of New Orleans, providing analysis, insight and speculation on development scenarios, necessitating a synthesis of all knowledge gained throughout the course of the summer semester in your combined coursework.

Course Format

This course is organized and conceived as a seminar, not a lecture. The delivery of material will be both formal (presentations and reading analysis) and informal (open conversation and discussion about topics at hand, field trips). The success of this class, however, is contingent on the level of participation from all students. As such, we place a great emphasis on how well one engages material given directly and through efforts to bring other associated experience and coursework into the conversation.

As described above, the course will be broken up in to three segments:

Part 1. A foundation of terms, systems and entities typically encountered in the development of urban real estate. Included in this will be a survey of building typologies (housing, mixed-use, etc.), definition of zoning and the role of planning, and the organization and agencies charged with administering regulations on the built environment.

Part 2. A contextual summary of urban development history and the influence of contemporary place making theories. The objective for this part is to provide a basic understanding of the forces that shaped the modern American city and a sample of the prevailing theories that have evolved to direct work in these contexts.

Part 3. On the ground and projective analysis. After looking at these issues in the class, the next step is to walk areas of New Orleans to ground ideas in the realities of city. This will form a summary of previous class discussions and frame the final assignment — a thorough development analysis of a chosen section of the city.
Course Requirements

The course has three main requirements:

1. Class Participation: This is the major component of this course’s evaluation. Given the brevity of the class and the course load of the summer, this class will rely heavily on in-class participation and discussion in lieu of a heavier workload outside of class.

2. Mid-Course Analysis Project: At the end of the first section there will be a take home project that will evaluate your understanding of the presented material. An assignment sheet with specific requirements will be given out at that time.

3. Final Analysis Project: Final Presentations: each student/team will each have 20 minutes to make presentations on case assignments provided by instructors. Submit 2 hard copies of slides at beginning of class.

Course Policies

Evaluation

Grading will be based on the quality of response to the presentations, paper and participation (physical and mental). Severely weak and/or partial compliance to any of the above will see a reciprocating grade mark (D). Simply completing the work for an assignment will only qualify for a passing mark (C). Exceptional responses will be rewarded with the highest grade (B, A). Complete failure to complete the material will receive a reciprocal mark (F).

Each course requirement will be weighted towards the final grade as follows:

- Class Participation — 50 percent
- Mid-Term Project — 20 percent
- Final Project — 30 percent

Incomplete and late work

While the course isn't designed to have distinct deadlines, it is expected that there will be a measurable amount of material development between classes. There will also be specific requirements determined in class for each individual and group. It is expected that this will be accomplished prior to the following class unless specifically stated otherwise. Progress and amount of development will be followed and documented closely throughout the course. If it is acknowledged that adequate progress is not being made then the instructor will provide a strict due date for the delinquent material. Inability to comply with this requirement in the specified time will result in a reduction of the student or groups overall grade commiserate with the scale of the particular assignment and at the sole discretion of the instructor. Extensions will only be considered if the request is presented to the instructors prior to a specified due date. Extenuating circumstances due to medical emergencies and crisis situations will be given special consideration so long as effort is made to alert instructors promptly.

Attendance

As stated in University policy, regular attendance at classes and any scheduled course conferences is required. Absences will be excused only in the event of a health emergency or other equally deserving — as judged by the professor — crisis, provided justification and written documentation is given. In such cases it is the responsibility of the student to promptly clear the absence with the professor, else it will remain
unexcused. Two consecutive absences or three nonconsecutive absences determined to be unexcused will result in a failing grade for the semester.

Persistent tardiness or early departure from class will not be tolerated. Final course grading will be reduced accordingly for those seen to be frequent perpetrators.

If an absence is unavoidable, students are to notify instructors by email prior to class.

Plagiarism

In the University’s Code of Academic Conduct, plagiarism is defined as the following:

Unacknowledged or falsely acknowledged presentation of another person's ideas, expressions, or original research as one's own work. Such an act often gives the reader the impression that the student has written or thought something that he or she has in fact borrowed from another. Any paraphrasing or quotation must be appropriately acknowledged. (Article III, Section 2, Part ii)

Any student found to commit or to have attempted to commit plagiarism, as defined, are subject to disciplinary sanctions outlined in the Code. To avoid this, whether knowingly or not, please see the writing guides available on the University's library webpage for information on properly citing references in your work. It cannot be emphasized enough how important it is to be diligent in acknowledgement of sources in ones work.

Accommodation

Pursuant to guidelines from the Goldman Office of Disability Services, students with documented disabilities that require accommodation should schedule an appointment with the instructors to discuss needed modifications to the academic environment to ensure equal access.

Office hours and contact information

Both instructors are available for meetings by appointment. Following are normal offices hours and contact information.

Michael Grote
mgrote@tulane.edu
334 354 0546
Richardson Memorial Hall, School of Architecture
Room 122
Office hours: By appointment

Jonathan Tate
jtate2@tulane.edu
504 383 4203
Richardson Memorial Hall, School of Architecture
Room 122
Office hours: By appointment
Course Schedule

The following schedule is meant as a guide for the semester. In all likelihood there will be slight modifications that respond to the progression of the material and the classes engagement. Readings for each class will be posted as PDF’s on shared folder.

21 July, Monday  
*Introduction and Overview*
Introductions, review of course outline and final requirements. Presentation on Holy Cross history and recent development initiatives.

22 July, Tuesday  
*Components of the City*
Description of building typologies and urban infrastructure that comprise the built fabric of city.

23 July, Wednesday  
*Urban Organization*
The role of planning, a master plan, land use and zoning regulations in the spatial organization of the city.

24 July, Thursday  
*Administrative Authorities*
The organization, authorities, commissions and regulatory bodies that manage urban spatial development.

25 July, Friday  
*The Draft CZO*
Using current master planning and zoning revisions in New Orleans as a case study.
Midterm assignment handout.

28 July, Monday  
*The Modern City*
A brief historical context of the modern American city.
Midterm assignment due. Review of final assignment.

29 July, Tuesday  
*City Concepts*
A summary of current urban theories and their influence on contemporary development.

30 July, Wednesday  
*Walkabout*
A walk through selected neighborhoods in New Orleans. Details will be provided in class prior to walk.

31 July, Thursday  
*Final Presentations*
Student final analysis presentations.

1 August, Friday  
*Final Presentations*
Student final analysis presentations.