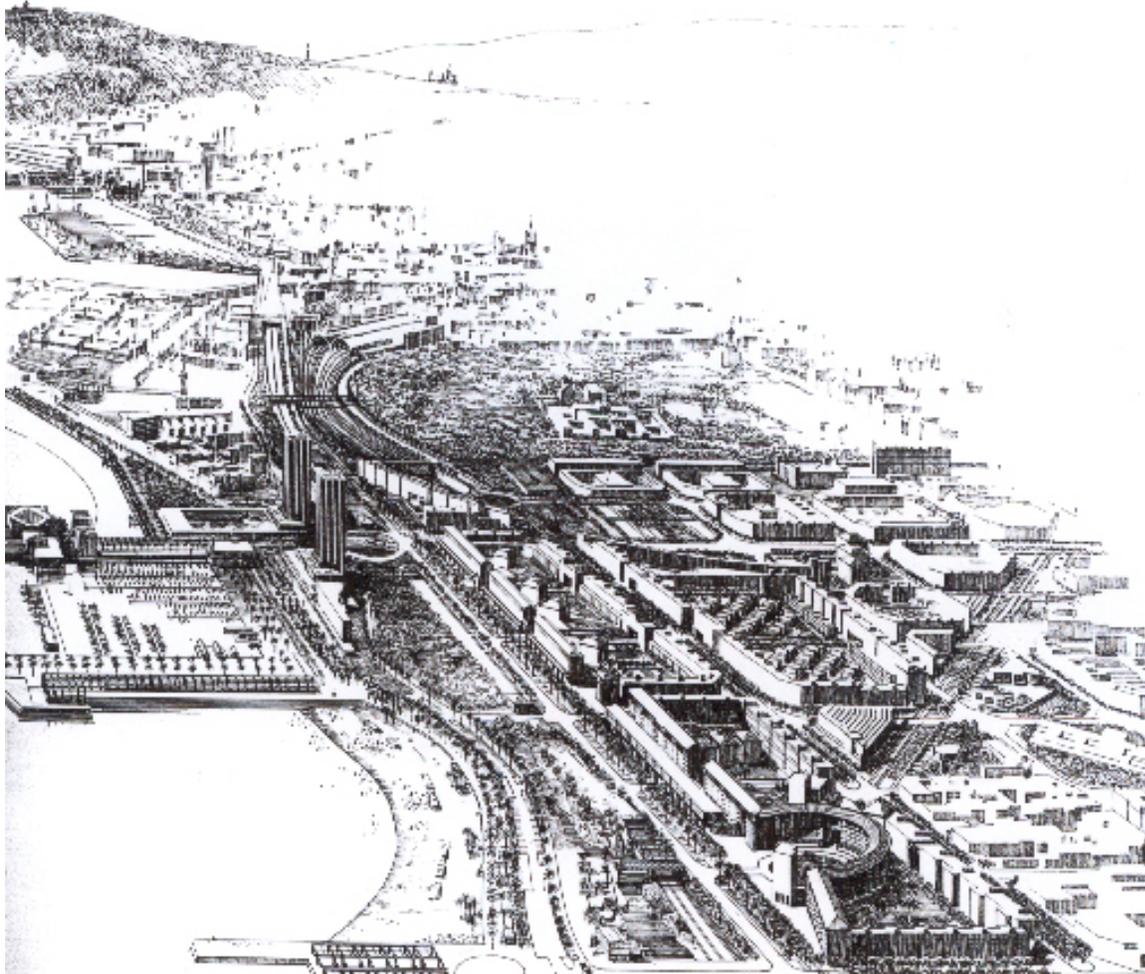


University of Oregon. Department of Architecture
Arch 407/507. Case Studies in Urban Design. Research Seminar.
Instructor: Gerry Gast.
Students in all disciplines welcome. No prerequisites.
Meets Wednesdays 9:00-11:50 AM in 128 Gerlinger Hall. 3 Credits.

“Seminal Projects and Programs in Urban Design”



La Villa Olímpica. Barcelona. The new city quarter built on the oceanfront site of a former industrial district. The project is one of several urban design accomplishments of Barcelona's recent urban design program.

Multi Discipline Perspective

This is a multi-discipline research seminar focusing on seminal urban design projects and programs in a global context. Students in Landscape Architecture, Urban Planning (PPPM), Environmental Studies, Historic Preservation, Real Estate and other disciplines of the University are welcome. No prerequisites.

Projects in the case study cities are examined through research, instructor lectures, discussion/debate, student presentations and a brief theory-based design charette.

Critical discussion compares contemporary and emerging theories of urban design, sustainable urbanism, urban landscapes, urban development and urban architecture.

Seminar Organization and Format.

Participants in the Seminar will each select (individually or in teams) one urban design case study for focus during the term. In addition to the research the study will involve preliminary and final presentations to the seminar group and writing a contributing chapter to a monograph publication produced by the seminar.

The research will examine the physical setting, history, political and economic context, environmental conditions and urban design strategies of the selected city. Urban design theories that influenced the project will be identified and compared to programs and projects in other cities.

Potential Case Study Cities (Examples)

Barcelona. Barcelona's transformation as the "City of Public Space" began with preparations for its hosting the 1992 Summer Olympics and continues to this day. New urban districts such as La Villa Olimpica were designed and built with astonishing speed. Older barrios such as El Raval were revitalized with careful infill development and sensitive new public spaces at several scales. Once persecuted by the repressive Franco dictatorship, Catalan Barcelona has effectively used urban design to achieve a new level of urbanity, sustainability and equity as one of the great cities of the Europe.

Berlin. The case study of Berlin begins with two significant efforts: The Berlin IBA of 1987, and the rebuilding of central Berlin following the German and city reunification in 1989. During the mid-1980's, the western part of the city was the site of the Berlin IBA (International Building Exposition) which focused on the theme "Rebuilding the European City". The Berlin IBA was influential globally in dismantling "modernism" as the prevailing urban design theory for redeveloping European cities. Several vacant urban quarters and sites were rebuilt based on international design competitions. Careful infill and rehabilitation projects filled sites that had remained vacant since the World War II bombing by Allied forces. The IBA re-established the validity of the historic European city of the pedestrian, street and public square as the urban model of choice, dethroning the "tower in the park" model proposed by Le Corbusier in 1923 and later followed in the post WW2 rebuilding.

After German reunification and the dismantling of the Berlin Wall, a massive rebuilding of central Berlin followed the German government's decision to re-establish the Berlin as the capital of the reunited nation. New urban districts were developed along with extensive public works and governmental building projects. The urban design philosophy established by the IBA, called "critical reconstruction", was extended to guide the rebuilding efforts.

Together, the IBA and central Berlin re-building comprised one of the most extensive and ambitious urban design and development projects in the world.

Students who select this project may focus on the most recent sustainability, housing and social equity initiatives of the city.

Curitiba, Brazil. Curitiba, Brazil was the first major city in the world to commit to an ambitious sustainability agenda. Under the leadership of former Mayor and Governor of Parana State, Jaime Lerner and his colleagues, Curitiba developed a multi-layered agenda of education, social services, public transit, energy and land conservation, and recycling that began in the late 1960's and continues today. Sustainability criteria are given first priority in guiding the city's development and urban design strategy. The city's accomplishments have been achieved with modest means and limited resources.

The Emscher Valley / The Ruhr. The Emscher Park IBA was an ambitious effort to re-build Germany's historic industrial Ruhr region on the basis of environmental sustainability principles. Once one of the most environmentally-devastated regions of the world, the Ruhr and Emscher River Valleys have been reborn with an urban design and environmental restoration strategy. Vast abandoned steel mills, coke plants, mines and other industrial plants have been converted to recreational open spaces, incubator industry sites and economic development centers with relatively little new construction. The "industrial archeology" of the region has been preserved and transformed to new uses in some of the most spirited and original design projects of the past half century.

Vancouver. Vancouver, British Columbia began its current path toward urban design excellence in the 1970's with the process accelerating in the mid-1980s as the City hosted its highly successful World Expo. New high density residential and mixed-use projects in the city center have pioneered new urban neighborhood and building types. Open space systems have created continuous linkages of parks and public spaces along False Creek, English Bay and the Straights of Georgia. Imaginative and sensitive infill development has been carefully sited in many of the city's neighborhoods. As Vancouver faces enormous growth pressures, it has successfully used its growth as an opportunity to create an urbane and diverse city center which transformed its stature from regional to world city in three decades.

Design Project Charette

About midway through the research process, the class will select a specific design project for a design charette rooted in the larger urban design framework of the city.

Independent Study Opportunities

Students who may wish to register for additional credits related to their research through Independent Studies with the Instructor may be eligible to do so. Please contact Gerry Gast as soon as possible.

Contemporary Urban Design Theories

Contemporary urban design is guided by a mix of theory and locally-grounded issues. Although international ideas and theories are often influential in guiding urban design approaches, local conditions, public values (politics), the socio-economic context, physical context, and other factors ultimately play the most important roles in determining urban design strategies and outcomes. The study of urban design is complicated by the fact that most projects are influenced by a hybrid of international ideas and local issues blended into a complex "chemistry".

The research projects and seminar discussions will attempt to assess which urban design theories have been influential in each case. How were they applied and what was the result? Through critical discussion, the case studies will help assess the value of the theories and their transferability to other cities and projects.

Examples:

The city as organic growth and generator of diversity.

Writing: Jane Jacobs, Richard Sennett, Christopher Alexander.

Projects: Pike Place Market, Seattle; Swan's Marketplace, Oakland; The Bologna, Italy Historic Preservation Program; *The Oregon Experiment*.

The city of public space / public space is the city.

Writing: Oriol Bohigas (MBM, Barcelona), Alex Krieger.

Projects: La Villa Olimpica and recent projects, Barcelona; Bilbao Urban Projects, Bilbao; Schouwburgplein, Rotterdam; Historic Port Regeneration, Genoa, Italy; Waterplace Park, Providence, R.I.; Baltimore Inner Harbor; Portland City Center.

Critical reconstruction of the historic city.

Writing: Aldo Rossi, Rob and Leon Krier, Pier-Luigi Cervellati.

Projects: International Building Exposition (IBA), Berlin (1980's); The Rebuilding of Central Berlin- Potsdamer Platz, Strasse Unter den Linden (1990s-present);

Rebuilding of Nieumarkt, Amsterdam (Van Eyck and Bosch); The Bologna, Italy Historic Preservation Program; Battery Park City, New York; Mission Bay, San Francisco.

Capital investment and economic development.

Writing: Edward Glaeser, *Triumph of the City*.

Projects: Postdamer Platz, Berlin; Canary Wharf/The Docklands, London; Concord Pacific Place and Coal Harbor, Vancouver, BC; Koop van Zuid (Rotterdam South), Rotterdam; Kampii Center, Helsinki; Battery Park City, New York.

The Decentralized City

Writing: Edward Glaeser, Joel Garreau.

Projects: Suburban and "edge city" North America; Worldwide urban edge city growth; South and Central American favelas and marginalized neighborhoods.

New urbanism and the "edge city"

Writing: Peter Calthorpe, Andres Duany and Elizabeth Plater-Zyberk, Robert AM Stern.

Projects: Seaside, FL; Kentlands, MD; Celebration, FL; Bellevue, WA; Stapleton, Colorado; Playa Vista, CA.

Landscape Urbanism

Writing: James Corner (Field Operations), Charles Waldheim, Alex Krieger, Moshen Mostafavi, Topos 71 Issue on "Landscape Urbanism"

Projects: Parc de la Villette, Paris; NYC High Line, Fresh Kills Landscape Competition; Schouwburgplein, Rotterdam.

Environmentally-Sustainable cities

Projects: The City of Curitiba, Brazil; IBA Emscher Park, The Ruhr Region, Germany; the rebuilding of Byker, England and previous Swedish projects by Ralph Erskine; Southeast False Creek Sustainable Community, Vancouver, BC; Recent City initiatives in London, San Francisco, Portland, New York and Chicago.

Information and Questions

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Gerry Gast is an architect / urban designer and member of the University of Oregon Architecture faculty. He taught for several years as Visiting Associate Professor in the Program on Urban Studies at Stanford University where he authored and taught the two core courses in urban design. He is a founding principal of Gast Hillmer Urban Design in the San Francisco Bay area. Recent projects include design of the new Stryiskyi Park campus for the Ukrainian Catholic University (UCU) in Lviv, Ukraine and the Urban Design component of the General Plan for Redwood City, California in Silicon Valley.

Professor Gast is currently working on research and design with the Pies Descalzos Foundation of Colombia on schools in marginalized neighborhoods of the country.