

## **Urban Studio**

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The city and the urban built landscape are the subject of this studio, focusing on a range of scales: the city, neighborhood, streets and specific public spaces. Based on a thorough documentation and analysis of the chosen urban area, students will be introduced to urban environments and processes, as they vary in different contexts, and integrate various social, cultural, architectural, ecological and governance aspects. The studio is informed by histories of urban morphology, local and regional identity, and sustainability, and will enable students to understand, identify and address urban issues within the context of Karachi. It will also help them develop skills in conceptualization and visualization. Students will be encouraged to apply their learnings and knowledge from other disciplines and courses in anthropology, history, media, psychology and political science, reconciling them with dynamic forces of urban transformations, architecture and planning.

The studio course is practice based, with a focus on hands-on field training of urban documentation, analysis and will culminate in the form of a policy brief proposing pertinent design and policy interventions tailored to the designated study area. The course will follow a studio format, with site visits, lectures, discussions and several individual and group desk crits throughout the semester. Data collection, field visits and visualization will require extra time on the part of students, in addition to assigned class schedule.

### **Course Objectives:**

This course aims to

- Develop disciplinary knowledge and practice-based learning amongst students, enhancing their analytical and critical thinking skills in evaluating urban spaces through observations, engagement and group learning.
- Introduce students to the concept of studio style learning, with the semester project conceived to impart fundamental knowledge and technical skills necessary in the urban discipline.
- Impart an understanding of urban terminologies, theoretical underpinning and spatial analysis, along with representation techniques to design, communicate, analyse and present urban planning concepts.
- Familiarize students with different quantitative, qualitative and other observation exercises for data collection in the field.
- Develop a deep understanding of contextual realities before making policy recommendations. Such learning is beneficial for other subjects in the social sciences including final year thesis projects.
- To foster creativity, cultivate effective communication and teamwork skills through collaborative design exercises and peer to peer learning.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

Students will be able to

- Develop a vocabulary of urban space by building upon the discussions and work in the design studio and demonstrate an understanding of fundamental urban space concepts, terminologies and methodologies for analysis

- Become well-versed in urban documentation, representational techniques, qualitative research methods and contextual realities of the built environment and the processes that lead to (and complicate) them.
- Gain insights into underlying theories and principles of urban design and planning
- Investigate the paradigms of urban design and policy planning and their role in shaping the built environment.
- Develop relevant skills to analyze and assess public spaces, neighborhoods and streets

## I. Weekly Schedule

Week 1	Introduction to the studio, course objectives and guidelines. Introduction to the studio exercise
Week 2	Key concepts and theories in urban design and planning
Week 3	Introduction to site analysis and documentation – collecting qualitative and quantitative data from the field
Week 4	Site Visit – first hand observations and secondary study
Week 5	Lecture on historic background of the study site DESK CRIT 1: Defining the site area, preparing base map and first progress (group)
Week 6	DESK CRIT 2: Progress, critique, suggestions and areas for further exploration
Week 7	DESK CRIT 3: Documentation finalization (Invitation to Dr. Adam and Dr. Arsalan from Urban Studies Cluster to attend and give feedback) Discussion on graphical representation and mapping visualization
Week 8	Submission of final documentation from site (midterm project)
Week 9	Lecture on analysis, inference and SWOT analysis Class discussion on problems and potentials of the site – preliminary observations
Week 10	DESK CRIT 4: Progress of swot analysis of the site
Week 11	Case study selection and brainstorming potential policy and project interventions
Week 12	Working on policy framework, building/urban codes and findings from the project
Week 13	DESK CRIT 5: Finalizing policy brief: Creating a policy brief
Week 14	DESK CRIT 6: Bringing everything together – progress on feedback received on midterm submissions, brainstorming potential panel ideas
Week 15	Pre-Final review – documentation, analysis and policy brief on a single panel – discussing narrative flows
Week 16	Final Jury – guests from within and outside IBA to be invited

## II. Reading List:

*Every week, two students shall present individual summaries of the assigned readings followed by a discussion on core themes, theories and findings from them.*

### Broad themes:

1. Mumford, Lewis (1961) The City in History
2. Lynch, K (1960). The Image of the City
3. Doxiadis, K. (1968). Ekistics: The Science of Human Settlements
4. Bacon, Edmund N. (1974) Design of Cities
5. Morris, A.E.J. (1979) History of Urban Form
6. Kostoff, S. (1991) The City Shaped: Urban Patterns/Meanings Through History

### **Theorizing and designing urban spaces:**

7. Krier, Rob (1979) *Urban Space*
8. White, H. W. (1980). *The Social Life Of Small Urban Space*.
9. Appleyard, D. (1981). *Liveable Streets*
10. Madanipour, Ali (1996) *Design of Urban Space: An Inquiry into Socio-Spatial Process* (NY: Wiley)
11. Mehta, V. (2013). *The Street. A quintessential Social Public Space*. New York: Routledge
12. Gehl, J and Brigitte, S. (2013). *Life Between Buildings; How To Study Public Life*

### **Urban Analysis**

13. Ching, Frank (1975) *Architectural Graphics*
14. Walker, T.D. (1977) *Plan Graphics*
15. Edward White, E. (1982). *Site Analysis*
16. Lynch, K. (1995). *City Sense and City Design*
17. Schwalbach, G. (2009). *Basics: Urban Analysis*
18. Larice, M., & Macdonald, E. (Eds.). (2013). *The Urban Design Reader* (2nd Ed.). Routledge. (Chapters 55, 59, 60, 63, 64)
19. Emily Talen, E. (2011) *City Rules: How Regulations Affect Urban Form*

### **III. Studio Assignment**

The studio assignment is designed in a way that throughout the semester, students will work together as one group studying a chosen site within the city, with individual tasks divided amongst students but the final presentation will be as a collective output. This assignment comprises an in-depth documentation and analysis of an urban area, its physical, social, cultural, environmental, and economic and other factors. Students will conduct a systematic, observation-based mapping of the assigned urban space

#### **Stage 1:**

- (a) Visit the site, walk the streets and document with photographs, drawings, and maps;
- (b) Preparation of a base map and defining the study area
- (c) Collecting history of the area (through secondary sources, archives, pictures), evolution, existing planning documents/building regulations, development plans
- (d) Compile information on the chronological urban morphological development
- (e) Current landmarks and main spatial and geographical features (rivers, roads), buildings of historic significance/local distinctiveness

#### **Stage 2:**

Use standard study and visualization techniques to map

##### *1. Physical Documentation*

- Zones and Land use
- Building types (specific) or facilities mapping
- Building heights
- Urban density features (buildings/streets), neighborhood street patterns
- Open vs built spaces: Nature of open spaces (size, location, shape)
- Transport networks (primary, secondary, tertiary), vehicular movement and circulation patterns, bus stops and other infrastructure

- Parking and congestion nodes
  - Pedestrian movement and Circulation patterns
  - Street widths, street sections, density of adjacent buildings, architectural form,
  - Classification of built form: facades and typologies (urban semiotics)
  - Signage, legibility mapping (visual clutter)
  - Public activity mapping (activity nodes, market character)
2. *Social*
- Population stats (historic data; density etc. from census)
  - Ethnic and Religious profiles
  - Socio economic mapping/income profiles/occupations
  - Age and education profiles
  - Cultural heritage/spaces mapping
  - Seasonal activity mapping (religious/festivals/bazaars)
  - Etymological profile
  - Security mapping (crime, street lighting etc)
  - Community development/facilities, gathering areas, social hangout spaces
  - Important nodes (interactions between people and built form, activity relationships)
  - Place making (jugaad) and place identity (through conversations with long term residents)
  - Formal vs informal activity (encroachments, hawkers, parking)
3. *Environmental*
- Landscape features and elements (tree cover, green spaces, biodiversity)
  - Contours (land elevation)
  - Climate/Climatic Profile (sun/wind direction, wind corridors etc)
  - Pollution (Visual, Sound, garbage dumping sites)
  - Shade profile and shadow patterns
  - Urban air quality, heat island mapping, flood mapping
4. *Governance*
- Electoral constituencies
  - Administrative boundaries
  - List of Stakeholders (markets, educational institutes, religious, political etc.)
  - Ownership patterns (public/private ownership)
  - Real Estate Value
  - Sites of contestation (power dynamics between stakeholders)

**Stage 3:**

- a) SWOT analysis
- b) Interpretive Analysis

Both quantitative and qualitative aspects of each area must be analyzed and presented with a critical lens. The analysis must feed into policy interventions for improvements in public spaces and addressing the issues and concern identified.

**Stage 4:**

- a) Designing a policy brief:

Students will apply findings from their study to develop a policy brief. Based on findings from their analysis, they will compile their policy interventions into a two page policy brief for the urban space under study. The proposed policy and interventions must respond to the context and conditions, incorporate or address/acknowledge local and national planning policy requirements, and must be economically, socially and environmentally sustainable. What principles should guide development in the study area? Can those principles/programs/activities/interventions be scaled up and applied to other areas in the city/country? These can be guiding questions for students when formulating their policy brief.

All four stages are discrete parts of a **cumulative whole project**. Each focuses on a smaller subset of the core urban analysis exercise. An example of what the final product can/will look like is [https://issuu.com/cherngyu/docs/studio\\_1\\_group\\_3](https://issuu.com/cherngyu/docs/studio_1_group_3) (without the design approach section); [https://issuu.com/pennplanning/docs/0515\\_paipa\\_final](https://issuu.com/pennplanning/docs/0515_paipa_final) <https://archinect.com/ar.mayureshdesai/project/urban-design-site-analysis-documentation> (street observation and analysis)

#### IV. Course Expectations and Student Responsibilities:

- Complete all course assignments and projects by the given deadlines. There can be no leniency in submission dates as your individual outputs will reflect on the progress/work of the entire class.
- Work on ongoing projects in the studio and take timely desk critiques. Students are expected to show measurable progress in their work from one class to the next. All progresses are graded and can have a marked impact on the final grade.
- Do not miss presentation/discussion session and desk crits, otherwise it would become difficult for you to grasp subsequent studio sessions, and you will miss out on the opportunity to learn from the work of your peers. Eventually, this will make it difficult for you to complete the assigned exercise/task.
- To effectively engage with the studio exercise, it is imperative to undertake site visits beyond scheduled class sessions. A sincere commitment to the course is indispensable for allocating the requisite time and effort demanded by the exercise.
- Be mindful of your attendance as each class builds upon those that precede it, and arriving later than 30minutes will be penalized with a book review.
- Throughout the semester, students will be required maintain a sketchbook for quick sketches, doodles, observations, visual cues and other details which they observe on commute, site, or other daily observations/abstractions/analytics. This sketchbook (can include short notes) may be asked for interim review at any time during the semester and must be submitted by each student at the end of the semester.

#### V. Grading Scheme:

- **Participation and attendance** **15%**
- **Literature Review Discussion and writeup** **10%**
- **Sketchbook** **5%**
- **Studio Assignments/Case studies/Exercises/Readings** **50%**
  - Stage 1: (group)

- Desk Crit 1 5%
    - Final 10%
  - Stage 2: (individual)
    - Desk Crit 2 10%
    - Desk Crit 3 10%
  - Stage 3: (individual)
    - Desk Crit 4 5%
  - Stage 4: (smaller groups)
    - Desk Crit 5 10%
- **Assessments Final Presentation** (individual) **20 %**
  - Desk Crit 6 5%
  - Final Presentation 15%