Course Description

Whether planned or unplanned, guided by theory or by ‘organic growth’, making cities is one of the biggest and most consistent of all collective human enterprises. Our chief interest is in studying the history of how major cities are made, remade, and at points have become ‘unmade’. The premise of the course is that a city is always shaped by and in turn influences five driving forces: geographic/ecological, economic/social, spiritual, political/military, and technological/material ones. We view these forces as a causal superstructure and frame for considering how cities develop, and though these lenses we seek to better understand the history of urban form and urbanization.

Why do cities assume the physical form that they do; how do we assess urban morphology? What caused cities originate and why do they persist, despite current technological abilities to undermine the city? Do cities have a biological-evolutionary process? How do cities attract and retain populations? How have theocratic beliefs shaped city form? In what ways are cities instruments of control, whether it be through military or political organization? How does city form structure power relations? How does it create the public sphere? Are cities purely nodes of collection, exchange, and distribution, be it for capital or other pooled resources? How have certain cities impacted others as models for urban form or image? How are cities interpreted and how are they defined? What is the historiography of urban planning as a discipline?

Lectures and discussions are organized as a response to questions such as these.

Throughout the course, a two-fold framework will be employed to address the complex development of cities in history: we trace both a diachronic progression of accumulative forms and spaces, in parallel with examining synchronic slices of how new ideas about the city were manifest across distinct geographies and cultures. Beginning with the emergence of cities in the Fertile Crescent and ending with 21st century, urban development will be studied by examining how the five aforementioned forces shaped cities repeatedly.
Course Format

The course is divided into lectures and workshop sessions with lectures generally held on Tuesdays and workshops on Thursdays. Examining targeted cities throughout history and across the globe, the lectures draw attention to the forces that have shaped urban form, providing an historical account integrated together with an analysis of various physical changes that have taken place in the city. As such the lectures aid in establishing a conceptual-analytic framework for how to approach, understand, and make use of information and data that concerns urban form. In the workshop component of the class small groups of students will each be assigned one city or a designated part of it, which that group will work on throughout the semester by exploring, assessing and creating new spatial data for that city. During the spring term of 2018, our primary cities will be Boston, Cairo, Hong Kong, London, and Mexico City. Within each of these metropolises the designated group will focus on “the core,” thus the heart of the city as a concept and spatial unit will be scrutinized at various junctures during the course. One of our objectives in the workshops is to examine complex and dynamic changes in urban form through the making of a multilayered map.

Outside of classroom hours, students should expect to devote time to reading texts and working with data assembled in the workshops. Keep in mind that the amount of time students are expected to contribute will vary from week to week.

Course Requirements and Grading

1) Two Quizzes (approx. 30 minutes each, total 40%)
There will be two quizzes, one given on March 13 and the other on May 1. The specific format of each quiz will be discussed well in advance of the date on which it will be given. The quizzes will ask students to reflect on the material under discussion, including the readings, in creative ways, rather than demonstrate knowledge through rote memorization. You will be well served by keeping on top of the readings. Some texts will be discussed more extensively than others in class, you are expected to have a firm command of the major arguments and themes addressed in all assigned readings.

2) Pin-ups and Final Project (total 30%)
Intermittently during the term students will be asked to present the work they have developed in the workshops (and outside of class) during pin up sessions. Additionally, on May 12th, there will be a final presentation session with each group discussing their work within a given allotment of time. Professors and TAs will confer with one another about the quality of the work presented, giving an overall mark at the end of the term that reflects the caliber of each individual’s contribution to the group. Specific instructions about each pin up will be given in advance of each pin up session.

3) Participation and Attendance (total 30%)
We often will devote a substantial amount of time to discussion and to group work, particularly during the workshops. You are expected to come to every class with thoughtful questions and well-reasoned arguments based upon the assigned readings, and to participate fully in the workshops. Attendance is
assumed and your participation mark will be impacted if you fail to actively participate in class. Lectures and workshops are complements, not substitutes.

N.B.
Failure to complete ANY one of the course assignments will result in an overall failure of the class. All work must be turned in by the due date indicated for each assignment or you will face a grade penalty for tardy submissions. Students cannot make up work or receive a grade of incomplete, except as allowed by the Institute.

**Academic Integrity**

We adhere to MIT’s Academic Integrity policy, which reads in part, “MIT anticipates that you will pursue your studies with purpose and integrity. The cornerstone of scholarship in all academic disciplines is honesty. MIT expects that you will approach everything you do here honestly—whether solving a math problem, writing a research or critical paper, or writing an exam” (see complete policy at web.mit.edu/academic-integrity). In this course, we will hold you this standard for two essential reasons. First, it is essential to the learning process that you are responsible for your own work. Failing to do the work yourself will result in a lesser understanding of the content, and there for a less meaningful education for you. Second, it is critical that there be a level playing field for all students in this course so that the integrity of the Institute’s educational program is maintained. Any student found plagiarizing will fail the course.

**Course Schedule and Reading Assignments**

Feb 6 TU
**Intro and Overview (Jacobi & Segal)**
*Course history/ intro of team / course structure*
What is the city?
Why do cities exist?
How are we to understand cities?
Lecture on key readings on the history of cities
Assign groups and readings for Feb. 14

Feb 8 TH
**Discussion: Forces and Forms: Understanding the City**

**Environmental (Nature and Geography) (Group 1)**

**Economic (Group 2)**


**Suggested:**


**Spiritual (Group 3)**


**Political (Group 4)**


**Suggested:**


**Technological (Group 5)**


**Suggested**


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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<td>Feb 13 TU</td>
<td><strong>Introduction of course Workshop</strong> project&lt;br&gt;overview; presentation of previous projects; group assignments&lt;br&gt;discussion of readings on the “core” or “heart” of the city&lt;br&gt;• CIAM 8th International Congress for Modern Architecture (Hoddesdon, England, 1951)</td>
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<td>Feb 20 TU</td>
<td><strong>NO CLASS MONDAY SCHEDULE</strong></td>
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<td>Feb 22 TH</td>
<td><strong>Guest Lecture: Spatial Planning Traditions in China (Yulin Chen)</strong></td>
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<td>March 8 TH</td>
<td><strong>First presentations</strong></td>
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<td>March 13 TU</td>
<td><strong>Quiz 1</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Lecture: The Ottoman City (Segal)</strong></td>
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March 15 TH Lecture: Utopia and Military Control: The Renaissance & The Baroque Diagonal (Jacobi)

March 20 TU Laws of the Indies and the Colonial City (Jacobi)

March 22 TH Workshop: Visit to the Boston Public Library Discussion: maps and surveying (Jacobi & Segal)

March 27 & 29 SPRING BREAK

April 3 TU Lecture: Health, hygiene and the 19th century city (Jacobi)
Workshop: the grid

April 5 TH Lecture: The city as object: social surveys, censuses, and the exhibited city (Jacobi)

April 10 TU Workshop: Sitte and Sitte design project

April 12 TH Second presentations (group 1)

April 17 TU Patriots Day Vacation

April 19 TH Second presentations (group 2)
April 24 TU  Guest Lecture: Chantal El Hayek and Ali Khodor

April 26 TH  Lecture: Garden Cities and Suburbs (Segal)

May 1 TU  QUIZ 2
Lecture: the Modern city (Jacobi & Segal)

May 3 TH  Final presentations (group 1 including all MArch students)
Final project work must be submitted for groups 1 & 2

May 8 TU  Final Presentation (group 2)

May 10 TH  Lecture: Rethinking the Modern city (Jacobi & Segal)

May 15 TU  Course wrap-up

May 17 TH  Course wrap-up

Working Bibliographies
**Readings on Urban Everyday Life**


**Digital Representation of Urban Form**


