

HIS 249/HIS 349
THE DESIGNED ENVIRONMENT
Spring WEC 2009
SYLLABUS

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Office: M 12:15-1:00 and W 1:00-1:30 until late April, and by appointment

Course Description: This course will look at how issues in the designed environment (the relationships of place and space, ideal and real, public and private) have been reflected in and explored through architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design. As such, this course blends architecture, architectural history, and urban history. It is aimed at students interested in architecture, cities, and history.

NOTE: Most of our class sessions will be held at various sites around the cities. This will require driving (carpooling!), parking, and walking. We will meet rain/snow or shine, so be prepared for the weather. You will be glad to have sunscreen, a hat, mittens(?), comfortable footwear, an umbrella, a bottle of water, and money for the bus, parking, and snacks.

Course Objectives: This course addresses the designed environment, the intentionally designed places in which we live. We will investigate architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design, both in class and in frequent site visits to prominent local examples of design excellence. The interaction of these three disciplines historically will be the framework for our study. Students will be asked to evaluate designed places for themselves in the context of what we learn in class. Thus, the course has several objectives appropriate to an introductory course that meets the *Aesthetics* and *City* perspectives as well as a *Liberal Arts Foundation course in the Humanities*:

1. To introduce students to architecture, landscape architecture, and urban design as they have evolved over time.

2. To introduce students to the history of the Twin Cities in the broader context of American urban history, using the built environment of Minneapolis and St. Paul as visual texts.

3. To enter the world of design and history through first-hand observation and experience by using the Twin Cities as our experiential laboratory.

4. To encourage interdisciplinary thinking. As noted, the course will draw on insights from architecture, landscape architecture, and urban history.

5. To develop the ability to assess and evaluate designed environments from aesthetic and historical perspectives. As noted below, students will be provided sets of questions/considerations to form the basis of their initial investigation of site visits.

6. To develop oral and written expression. Through oral and written assignments, we will gain experience in those forms of scholarly communication.

Writing Skill (upper division only)

Students registered for the upper-division sections of the course may use the course to satisfy a graduation skill in writing. Thus, the course has several objectives appropriate to an advanced course that meets the *Writing* skill requirement:

*To help students develop competency in constructing clear and effective written responses to the design and history issues in the course through short and long writing assignments.

*To provide opportunities for students to undertake research projects that explore a Twin Cities building in depth.

*To give students practice in research and documentation, emphasizing local history and primary source materials.

New Core Curriculum system: *LAF in Humanities* (lower division only)

This Humanities Liberal Arts Foundation will help you explore the range and possibilities of human experience. Depending on the course, you may investigate the diversity of human nature and culture, our forms of communication and persuasion, our powers of reason, sympathy, and imagination, our needs as individuals and roles as citizens, and our relationship to the beautiful, the transcendent, and the divine. As the philosopher Martha Nussbaum has written, however, all Humanities disciplines have something in common: they help students *use reason and imagination to enter broader worlds of cultures, groups, and ideas*.

Augsburg's Humanities departments are Communication Studies, English, History, Modern Languages, Philosophy, and Religion. These six disciplines engage human experience from different perspectives using different modes of discourse, but they share a common goal of rigorous inquiry into the ways written and spoken language can record, discover, and creatively express the truths of human experience.

In particular, students will improve their ability to find meaning in a written, visual, or spoken text; they will improve their ability to use the methods of inquiry and critical thinking specific to the Humanities; students will learn about the core values shared by scholars in Humanities disciplines; and students will cultivate their ability to imagine, create, and respond aesthetically to texts and experiences within the Humanities.

Old General Education system: Perspectives (upper or lower division)

To meet the *Aesthetics* Perspective of General Education by gaining an understanding of and critically reflecting on architecture and landscape architecture as forms of artistic expression, their historical development and variations in aesthetic taste and performance across time and urban cultures, and exposure to different theoretical frameworks for understanding the designed urban environment.

OR

To meet the *City* Perspective of General Education by gaining an understanding of and critically reflecting on the historical dimension of urban communities and institutions; the metropolitan areas; and the nature and consequences of metropolitan diversity.

(Note: students may apply the course to only one perspective.)

Course Requirements:

The requirements are: regular class *attendance* and participation in all site visits, required *readings* listed below, three short *essays* on site visits, a midterm *exam*, a comprehensive final *exam*, and demonstrated *engagement* with the class and course material.

Regular **class attendance** *is both essential and required* since everyone is expected to take an active and positive role in the classroom and at the sites. If one is going to miss a class, the professor must be contacted in advance. *Unexcused absences, chronic tardiness and early departures will cause a reduction in grade.*

Reading assignments must be completed before the class meeting for which they are assigned. Please note that the reading load varies from day to day, and plan accordingly. In general, however, the standard college expectation of two hours of homework per one hour of class applies to this course. That is, one should anticipate an average of seven hours of homework per class. The readings are not optional. Knowledge of their content (texts and images) should be demonstrated in writing assignments and on exams.

Students will be given a set of questions to form the basis for investigations of sites in each of the course's sections. The responses to these questions will form the basis for short **site visit essays**, approximately two (2) pages in length, to be written in reaction to three (3) of the individual sites visited. These essays should be submitted electronically (see below). The essays are to be submitted at the beginning of the class session in which they are due. Each essay is worth a possible seventy-five (75) points.

The **exam** will be based on the material presented in class as well as the readings. The test will include the identification and discussion of images, short-essay discussion of terms, and an essay. You may bring to the exam one 8 1/2 X 11 inch study sheet with whatever information you wish written on **one** side of it. These study sheets may be prepared in conjunction with other students, must be in your own handwriting, and must contain your signature. They may not be typewritten or word-processed. They may not be photocopies. They will be collected at the end of the exam. Sheets that do not conform to these rules will not be allowed. (Final exam 200 points)

Engagement has been defined as “a cognitive and affective process, enabled by the relationship between student and teacher, that stimulates curiosity and leads to focused attention, the discovery of connections and satisfaction with learning.” Demonstrating engagement includes, but is not limited to, active participation in class activities. In addition, students are expected to use the course web site. To access the course web site, point your browser to <http://augnet.augsburg.edu>, log into Augnet, and use the ‘My Courses’ (moodle) link. Please note that all materials (e.g., site visit essays, papers, and topic choices) should be submitted through the moodle course site. Engagement credits can be earned contributing to discussions in moodle and by posting outside material (e.g., from the internet, television, radio, newspapers) that connects to issues studied in the course. The engagement grade will be determined by a mixture of instructor-, peer- and self-assessment.

Students taking the course for **upper-division credit** (ART 349 or HIS 349) must write a ten- to fifteen-page research paper and present a brief oral summary of that paper to the class. For HIS 349 students, the research subject must be an investigation and analysis of the history of a particular building in the Twin Cities. A list of buildings is included with this syllabus. For ART 349 students, the research subject must be an investigation and analysis of the career of a specific architect associated with the designed environment of the Twin Cities. Please see the separate instructions and schedule for upper-division credit.

Readings in moodle course web site

Montgomery Schuyler, "Glimpses of Western Architecture: II-- St. Paul and Minneapolis," from *American Architecture and other writings* (originally published in *Harper's Monthly Magazine*, October 1891)

Erin Hanafin, "Long and Kees," *Architecture Minnesota* (November-December 1992): 39-40.

William Marlin, "Summing Up: A big old warehouse uncrates a rich mixture of activity and amenity," *Architectural Record* (Dec. 1975) v. 158: 108-112.

David Anger, "Mr. Halprin's Dance: Remembering the Original Nicollet Mall," *Hennepin History* (Summer 1997): 4-15.

Theresa Haynes, "Augsburg Park: A Forgotten Dream," *Minnesota History* (Winter 1967): 375-383.

John Reps, "Cemeteries, Parks, and Suburbs: Picturesque Planning in the Romantic Style," from *The Making of Urban America: A History of City Planning*, 325-348.

Theodore Blegen, *Horace William Shaler Cleveland: Pioneer American Landscape Architect*

Sharon Irish, "West Hails East: Cass Gilbert in Minnesota," *Minnesota History* (Spring 1993): 196-297.

Barbara Ann Caron, "The James Hill House: Symbol of Status and Security," *Minnesota History* (Summer 1997): 234-249.

Malcolm Gladwell, "The Terrazzo Jungle," *The New Yorker* (March 15, 2004), 120 ff.

Nancy A. Miller, "Arrested Development: Can Ralph Rapson's progressive vision for America's first 'New Town-In Town' be recovered in the beleaguered Cedar Square West?" *Architecture Minnesota* (January-February 2006), 39 ff.

Other helpful materials available in Lindell Library:

M. D. Shutter, *History of Minneapolis, Gateway to the Northwest*

Ernest Sandeen, *St. Paul's Historic Summit Avenue*

Penny Peterson, *Hiding in Plain Sight: Minneapolis' First Neighborhood*

John Borchert, et al, *Legacy of Minneapolis: Preservation Amid Change*

Henry Castle, *History of St. Paul and Vicinity*

C. C. Andrews, *History of St. Paul, Minn.: with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches of Some of Its Prominent Men and Pioneers*

David Anderson, ed., *Downtown: A History of Downtown Minneapolis and Saint Paul in the Words of the People who Lived It*

Lucile Kane and Alan Ominsky, *Twin Cities: A Pictorial history of St. Paul and Minneapolis*

Isaac Atwater, *History of the City of Minneapolis*

Horace Hudson, *A Half Century of Minneapolis*

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments: *(subject to change with prior notice)*

DATE	TOPIC/ACTIVITY	DUE	READINGS
4/4	Course Introduction Urban History/ Architecture intro. Research introduction	UD intent	Blumenson (scan entire) Millett, AIA 3-12; 585-597
4/18	St. Paul	UD topic	Millett, <i>LTC</i> , pp. 1-233 Schuyler, "Glimpses "
4/25	St. Anthony Minneapolis	SVE 1: St. Paul UD:outline/ biblio.	Millett, <i>LTC</i> , pp. 234-303 Hanafin, "Long and Kees" Marlin, "Summing up" Anger, "Mr. Halprin's Dance"
5/9	Cemeteries Suburbs Parks		Reps, "Cemeteries, Parks ..." Haynes, "Augsburg Park" Blegen, "H. W. S. Cleveland"
5/16	State Capitol Summit and Selby Avenues	SVE 2: Mpls., Suburbs or Cemeteries UD: Paper	Irish, "West Hails East" Caron, "The James Hill House"
6/6	Hiawatha Avenue Corridor	SVE 3: Summit/Selby	Miller, "Arrested Development" Gladwell, "Terrazzo Jungle"
6/20	Upper Division Presentations Final Exam	<i>OR</i> SVE 3: Hiawatha UD: Revision	
T: 6/23	By 3:00 p.m. in moodle (UD drafts at Lindell 225B)	<i>OR</i> UD: Revision	

HIS 249/HIS 349 Site Visit Essays *Questions*

1. Identify and give the location for the topic of your site visit essay. Include the day/date of our visit.
2. Describe a design element in the site(s). This could be a space, a building, or an aspect of a space or building. *It is not to be an overview of an entire day's visits, nor is it a "report" on the site itself.*
3. Analyze this element, considering its style as well as its historical and architectural functions. How is it successful or unsuccessful as part of the designed environment?

All essays must be typed and double-spaced. Essays should be submitted electronically in Moodle. First, write your response in a word processing document and name the file according to the following convention: yourname.SVE# (for example, "kimball.SVE2"). If you are not using Microsoft Word, please save your document as an .rtf file. **Be sure to put your name in the document itself.** Electronic essays must be submitted before class begins on the day on which they are due.

Grading Criteria

You are responsible for submitting **three** (3) essays of approximately two pages each in length. All assignments must be typewritten and have correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar. Grading will be done on a fifty-point scale with the following general criteria:

- 75 - Questions answered with appropriate connections to basic principles of urban history (physical structure and surroundings; evidence of social, cultural, and historical issues; connections to Twin Cities history; and patterns of use), to material presented in class, and to the course reading.
- 60 - Questions answered with appropriate connections made to the urban history characteristics, and to material presented in class.
- 50 - Questions answered with appropriate connections made to the historical principles.
- 35 - Questions not answered with appropriate reference to course material.

Other numbers will function as '+' or '-' grades.

Assignments that are not typed and/or lack proper spelling, grammar, punctuation, and other mechanics of writing will be graded lower than those with similar content but correct mechanics.

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UPPER DIVISION REQUIREMENTS

Please refer to the syllabus for class requirements for all students. In addition to the requirements included above, students taking the course for upper-division credit must write a ten- to fifteen-page research paper and give a five-minute presentation of that paper to the class. The research subject must be an architectural style represented in the built environment of the Twin Cities. Students will request one or more of the following styles through Moodle no later than the start of class on April 18. The instructor must approve the choice and will notify students through Moodle by April 20.

First Baptist Church, Mpls.	IDS Building
Pillsbury Hall	Fair Oaks
St. Paul Central Library	Woman's Club, Minneapolis
Rand Tower	Lowry Arcade
Germania Bank	Minneapolis Armory
Lake Harriet Bandshell	Highland Park Water Tower

In order to allow sufficient time for student research and instructor assessment of student work, this schedule will be followed for upper division students.

April 4: In-class discussion about the research process and strategies, schedule, and expectations; statement of intent to follow the upper-division option

By April 18: Topic selection (in Moodle)

May 9: Outline and bibliography, with research journal (include dates and place of research, questions for follow-up, etc.), indicating significant progress toward the completed project

May 30: Submit a complete version of the paper (endnotes, bibliography, appropriate formatting, etc.) You will receive feedback and comments to use in writing the final version of the paper.

June 20: Paper summaries will be presented in class (five minute presentation).

June 23: Final version of the paper is due by 3 pm.