

# Urban Futures

**Sustainability | Resilience | Liveability**

Autumn 2013

Thursdays in October and November, 3pm to 5pm

University Place Theatre A

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Office Hours: Mondays 4-5pm, Thursdays 5-6pm, and by appointment

## Introduction

Urban design professionals are at the forefront of a wide variety of initiatives and activities to improve existing conditions in cities. Over the past three decades, the notion of sustainability has emerged as a prominent way of describing urban futures. More recently, ideas about resilience and liveability have emerged to complement and extend the notion of sustainability. These concepts involve very different assumptions about how to organise the economic, environmental, social, cultural, and political systems that support cities. Similarly, they have different implications for those urban actors who influence the built environment, including design professionals, policy makers, academic scholars, private businesses, non-profit organisations, community groups, and residents.

In this course unit, we will compare and contrast some of the most prominent ideas about urban futures across multiple scales, from buildings and neighbourhoods to districts, cities, and regions. Students are expected to gain in-depth knowledge of the ideas that inform debates on sustainability, resilience, and liveability as they relate to cities, and to understand how these ideas are transformed into real world interventions. Likewise, students should develop a detailed understanding of the opportunities and constraints offered by various contexts and how particular design ideas include implicit assumptions about what is 'good', 'desirable', or 'ideal'. Through the development of a critical and comparative sensibility on contemporary urban theories and practices, students will have the opportunity to develop a wide range of insights and strategies to inform their future activities as designers, civil servants, politicians, and citizens.

## Targeted Learning Outcomes

Through the successful completion of this course unit, students are expected to:

- Develop a detailed understanding of the discourses of sustainability, resilience, and liveability as they relate to urban development;
- Be conversant in contemporary urban design and policy responses;
- Be familiar with well-known and lesser known cases of urban development;

- Understand the challenges of applying universal theories to context-specific projects;
- And develop a conceptual and practical toolkit to apply to urban projects.

In addition, this course unit provides opportunities to develop professional skills including the competence to:

- Identify resources (books, articles, reports, websites, etc.) and assess their quality;
- Critique the arguments of competing positions and develop a balanced and informed opinion on specific issues;
- Discuss issues in a collaborative and dialogic setting;
- Develop teamwork experience;
- And elucidate complex urban development issues in a clear and thoughtful manner.

### **Lecture Schedule**

The class meets for two hours on Thursdays from 3pm to 5pm in University Place Theatre A on the dates noted in the table below. Each session is divided into two parts with a 10-minute break at the midpoint.

3 October	Introduction	Origins of Sustainability
10 October	Architecture and Sustainability	The Politics of Expertise
17 October	Communities and Liveability	Metrics and Measurement
31 October	Infrastructure and Resilience	Participatory Design
21 November	The Housing Challenge	Urban Transitions

### **Assessment**

The assessment for the course unit consists of a precedent study to connect the ideas on sustainability, resilience, and liveability with your studio work. Students will work in their studio groups to produce a 3000-word written report due on 23 January 2014. Instructions for the assessment will be provided in class and on Moodle.

### **Attendance and Learning Issues**

Students are required to attend class meetings and are allowed a maximum of two absences without penalty. Students who miss more than two meetings are required to inform Andy via email or in person.

Students with learning issues are encouraged to notify Andy to discuss any special considerations. All reasonable attempts will be made to accommodate learning issues on an individual basis.

### **Online Resources and Communication**

Reading materials, lecture notes, and other resources will be posted throughout the term on Moodle (<http://moodle.mmu.ac.uk>). Students can log in using their MMU IDs and passwords, the course unit materials are posted under 'Humanities and Technologies 2

(1D5Z0104\_1314\_9Z1F)'. All students are required to check their MMU email accounts and the Moodle website on a regular basis for updates and notifications.

### **Feedback**

The Manchester School of Architecture welcomes student feedback on any aspect of the course unit and encourages every student to complete an anonymous evaluation sheet for the course unit and staff involved. Feedback can also be provided in person, by telephone or email, or by letter to Andy or to the head of school (Prof Tom Jeffries).

### **Resources on Urban Futures**

There are many resources on the topics of sustainability, resilience, and liveability as they relate to urban design and development. Below is a brief list of books, journals and magazines, and online resources that may provide inspiration and insight.

#### Books

Beatley, Timothy. 2012. *Green Cities of Europe: Global Lessons on Green Urbanism*, Washington, D.C.: Island Press

Buchanan, Peter. 2005. *Ten Shades of Green: Architecture and the Natural World*, New York: Architectural League of New York

Dresner, Simon. 2008. *The Principles of Sustainability, Second Edition*, London: Earthscan

Farr, Douglas. 2008. *Sustainable Urbanism: Urban Design with Nature*, Chichester: Wiley

Glaeser, Edward. 2011. *Triumph of the City: How Our Greatest Invention Makes Us Richer, Smarter, Greener, Healthier, and Happier*, London: Pan MacMillan

Girardet, Herbert. 2004. *Cities People Planet: Liveable Cities for a Sustainable World*, London: Wiley

Guy, Simon and Steven A. Moore (eds). 2005. *Sustainable Architectures: Cultures and Natures in Europe and North America*, London: Routledge

Jenks, Mike and Nicola Dempsey (eds.). 2005. *Future Forms and Design For Sustainable Cities*, Oxford: Architectural Press

Moore, Steven A. (ed.). 2009. *Pragmatic Sustainability: Theoretical and Practical Tools*, London: Routledge

Newman, Peter, Timothy Beatley, and Heather Boyer. 2009. *Resilient Cities: Responding to Peak Oil and Climate Change*, Washington, D.C.: Island Press

Owen, David (2010) *Green Metropolis: Why Living Smaller, Living Closer, and Driving Less are the Keys to Sustainability*, London: Riverhead Press

Parr, Adrian and Michael Zaretsky (eds). 2010. *New Directions in Sustainable Design*, London: Routledge

Ritchie, Adam and Randall Thomas (eds.). 2008. *Sustainable Urban Design: An Environmental Approach, 2nd Edition*, London: Taylor and Francis

Roseland, Mark. 2012. *Towards Sustainable Communities: Solutions for Citizens and Their Governments, Fourth Edition*, Gabriola Island, B.C.: New Society Publishers

Ross, Andrew. 2011. *Bird on Fire: Lessons from the World's Least Sustainable City*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

Ryn, Sim van der and Stuart Cowan. 2007. *Ecological Design, 10th Anniversary Edition*, Washington, D.C.: Island Press

Tanzer, Kim and Rafael Longoria. 2007. *The Green Braid: Towards an Architecture of Ecology, Economy and Equity*, London: Routledge

Wheeler, Stephen. 2004. *Planning for Sustainability: Creating Livable, Equitable, and Ecological Communities*, New York: Routledge

Williams, Daniel E. 2007. *Sustainable Design: Ecology, Architecture, and Planning*, Hoboken: John Wiley and Sons

Wines, James. 2008. *Green Architecture*, London: Taschen

#### Journals and Magazines

*Cities: The International Journal of Urban Policy and Planning*,  
[www.journals.elsevier.com/cities](http://www.journals.elsevier.com/cities)

*Environment and Planning A|B|C|D*, [www.envplan.com](http://www.envplan.com)

*International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*,  
[onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/\(ISSN\)1468-2427](http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/journal/10.1111/(ISSN)1468-2427)

*Journal of Sustainable Development*, [www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/jsd/index](http://www.ccsenet.org/journal/index.php/jsd/index)

*Journal of Urbanism*, [www.tandfonline.com/toc/rjou20/current](http://www.tandfonline.com/toc/rjou20/current)

*Local Environment: The International Journal of Justice and Sustainability*,  
[www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/13549839.asp](http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/13549839.asp)

*Sustainability*, [www.mdpi.com/journal/sustainability](http://www.mdpi.com/journal/sustainability)

*Urban Studies*, [usj.sagepub.com](http://usj.sagepub.com)

#### Blogs and Online Resources

Archinnovations, [www.archinnovations.com](http://www.archinnovations.com)

Architecture for Humanity, [architectureforhumanity.org](http://architectureforhumanity.org)

The Atlantic Cities, [www.theatlanticcities.com](http://www.theatlanticcities.com)

Building Research Establishment (Sustainability and BREEAM),  
[www.bre.co.uk/page.jsp?id=1766](http://www.bre.co.uk/page.jsp?id=1766)

Design Council, [www.designcouncil.org.uk](http://www.designcouncil.org.uk)

Grist, [www.grist.org](http://www.grist.org)

Inhabitat, [www.inhabitat.com](http://www.inhabitat.com)

RIBA Sustainability Hub, [www.architecture.com/SustainabilityHub/SustainabilityHub.aspx](http://www.architecture.com/SustainabilityHub/SustainabilityHub.aspx)

Sustainablog, [www.sustainablog.org](http://www.sustainablog.org)

Treehugger, [www.treehugger.com/design](http://www.treehugger.com/design)