

## **EVDS 601 Conceptual Bases in Environmental Design**

Fall 2018, H(3-0)

Fridays 9:10-12:20  
Room PF 3176

Instructor: Noel Keough, PF 4176, [nkeough@ucalgary.ca](mailto:nkeough@ucalgary.ca)  
Office hours by appointment

Required Text: Greenfield, Adam (2018) *Radical Technologies: The Design of Everyday Life*.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Environmental design is an interdisciplinary approach to the analysis, conceptualization, and execution of interventions in human and natural environments at a variety of scales – from the object to the globe. These interventions affect policy, process, practice, and physical space. They affect things and people. Introducing key concepts and ways of thinking across interdisciplinary environmental design fields, the course will focus attention on the possibilities and limitations of environmental design research and practice.

### **Objectives**

1. Students will be able to critically discuss and articulate a range of theoretical perspectives on key conceptual bases of environmental design.
2. Students will be able to articulate their own understanding of key concepts in environmental design, and position their understanding in relation to prominent approaches within the field, and practices within their current and future professions.
3. Students will develop analytic skills to examine and assess environmental design research, and by extension, design interventions and critical design issues.
4. Students will improve their critical, creative and professional communications skills, including written, oral and visual communication, and they will demonstrate that their communication skills are commensurate with study at a graduate level in Canada.

### **Teaching Approach**

Through a seminar format, this course will introduce students to a range of the conceptual bases of environmental design. These concepts will be introduced, discussed and debated through readings, mini-lectures, small group discussion, and student presentations. Typically, weekly readings will be analyzed in student presentations, small group discussions or activities, and full-group discussions. A variety of assignments will help students develop their own thinking and approach to conceptual bases in environmental design. Readings will cover a range of approaches and topics in environmental design, including nature and sustainability, human and political ecology, modernity and technology, design thinking, and others brought forward by the students in the course according to their own research interests.

## Course Expectations and Means of Evaluation

Students will be expected to attend all seminar meetings. Students will also be expected to read assigned readings and come to class prepared to discuss the issues and concepts raised in the readings. Discussions will be respectful of all opinions.

Students must complete each of the course assignments in order to pass this course. There will be no final exam.

Quality of writing (spelling, grammar, clarity) or other forms of communication will be a component of the assessment of all assignments.

## Course Deliverables

The grade breakdown and assignments are as follows:

1. Participation 20%

*This includes participation in seminar and discussion groups, as well as the peer review process for the term paper.*

2. Reading Responses 10%

*The submission of five (5) reading responses, at least four (4) of which must be completed by October 24. Submit these in hard copy to Hana at the EVDS Front Desk by 09:00 on the day that the readings are assigned. Maximum of one page single-spaced. Reading Responses should summarize your reaction to the readings for that week and raise questions for discussion. These commentaries on the readings should be analytical rather than descriptive. That is, do not merely summarize the readings—we have all read them! Analyze them. Think about how they might relate to your understanding of environmental design, your particular discipline or profession, and of course your own research area/interests. These will be graded.*

3. First discussion-lead of readings 10%

*Groups of students will sign up to take on the lead in the discussion of the readings in Weeks 2-3 and 5-6. Groups may work together, or they may divide up the readings and present them individually. Regardless, we will spend time discussing, analyzing, and critiquing each reading each week. As with the Reading Responses, remember that we all have read the readings: there is no need to summarize them beyond identifying the thesis statement or statement of purpose; the methods for achieving the purpose; and the conclusion reached by the author. If there are particularly difficult or confusing parts of the reading, you may need to spend some time trying to explain what the author means; this may mean some outside research into the reading's bibliography, other articles that cite the reading, book reviews, etc. The main goals of leading the discussion are to assess the reading's strengths and weaknesses, and its contexts and biases in relation to environmental design research. Equally, discussion leaders decide on the best ways to engage their classmates in a discussion of these aspects of the readings. Leaders may plan for seminar discussion, small group work, design exercises, or other activities that may help the class engage with and understand the readings.*

4. Book review of the course book. Due November 19, 9 AM 20%

5. Second discussion-lead of readings, including reading selection 10%

6. Term Essay 30%

To conclude the course, you will write a considered academic essay (12-20 pages) that critically examines your research area in relation to conceptual bases of environmental design. Refer to handout for further details. This paper will be drafted, peer reviewed, and then a final version handed in for grading.

First Draft Deadline: December 3. Peer Review Day: Dec. 7. Final Draft Deadline: Dec. 10

## Course Readings

Weekly readings will be available on the course D2L site as PDFs or permanent web links, except for the Book Length Study that we will read in Weeks 7, 8, and 9. The book by Adam Greenfield (details above) must be purchased from the Press web site, amazon, etc.

## SEMINAR SCHEDULE

### Week 1, September 7

Introduction to the Course/ History and Culture of Environmental Design

Readings:

- Richard Wener, "History and Trends in Environmental Design Research (EDR)," *Journal of Architectural and Planning Research* 25:4 (Winter 2008), 282-297.

### Week 2, September 14

Case Studies of Research in Environmental Design: Evidence and Policy

Readings:

- Mary-Ellen Tyler and Michael Quinn, "A Social-Spatial Approach to Ecological Governance," *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social Sciences* 5:6 (2010), 1833-1882.
- Marco Musiani, et al., "How Humans Shape Wolf Behavior in Banff and Kootenay National Parks, Canada," *Ecological Modelling* 221 (2010), 2374–2387.
- Urban Planning and Health

### Week 3, September 21

Case Studies of Research in Environmental Design: Measuring

Readings:

- Jiat-Hwee Chang, "Thermal Comfort and Climatic Design in the Tropics: An Historical Critique," *The Journal of Architecture* 21:8 (2016), 1171-1202
- Reading 2 TBD
- Reading 3 TBD

### Week 4, September 28

Some Conceptual Bases of Environmental Design

Readings:

- Ian McHarg, “The Place of Nature in the City of Man,” *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 352:1 (March 1964), 1-12.
- Donald Schon, “Design as a Reflective Conversation with the Situation,” in *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action* (NY: Basic, 1983), 76-104.
- Richard Buchanan, “Wicked Problems in Design Thinking,” *Design Issues* 8:2 (1992), 5-21.

**Week 5, October 5**

Some Conceptual Bases of Environmental Design

Readings

- David Orr, “Human Ecology as a Problem of Ecological Design.” In *The Nature of Design*, Oxford University Press, 2002, 13-32.
- Bruno Latour, “A Cautious Prometheus? A Few Steps Toward a Philosophy of Design.” Keynote Lecture for the Networks of Design meeting of the Design History Society Falmouth, Cornwall, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2008.
- Barry Wylant, "Design and Thoughtfulness," *Design Issues* 32:1 (Winter 2016), 72-82.

**Week 6, October 12**

Interdisciplinarity

Readings:

- Avigail Sachs, “Architects, Users, and the Social Sciences in Postwar America,” in Kenny Cupers, ed., *Use Matters: An Alternative History of Architecture* (NY: Routledge, 2013), 69-84.
- Dena P. MacMynowski, “Pausing at the Brink of Interdisciplinarity: Power and Knowledge at the Meeting of Social and Biophysical Science,” *Ecology and Society* 12:1 (2007), 20.
- Bärbel Tress and Gunther Tress, “Capitalising on multiplicity: a transdisciplinary systems approach to landscape research,” *Landscape and Urban Planning* 57:3-4 (December 2001), 143-157.

**BLOCK WEEK—NO CLASSES October 15-19**

**Week 7, October 26**

Book Length Study in Interdisciplinary Environmental Design Research

Page range TBD

**Week 8, November 2**

Book Length Study in Interdisciplinary Environmental Design Research

Page range TBD

**Week 9, November 9**

Book Length Study in Interdisciplinary Environmental Design Research

Page Range TBD

*Book review assignment due to EVDS Front Desk by 12:00 on Monday November 19*

**UNIVERSITY-WIDE MID-TERM BREAK November 11-17**

**Week 10, November 23**

Classics or Cutting Edge

Readings:

Selected by students in consultation with their interim supervisors

**Week 11, November 30**

Classics or Cutting Edge

Readings:

Selected by students in consultation with their interim supervisors

*First drafts of Term Essay due (digitally) to peer review groups by 11:59 PM on Sunday December 2*

**Week 12, December 7:**

Classics or Cutting Edge/Peer Review Session

Readings:

Selected by students in consultation with their interim supervisors

Students also will read and provide feedback for several draft essays of their peers

*Final drafts of Term Essay due to EVDS Front Desk by 12:00 on Monday December 10*

**Grading Scale:**

Final grades will be reported as letter grades, with the final grade calculated according to the 4-point range. Assignments will be evaluated by percentage grades, with their letter grade equivalents as shown.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Grade Point Value</b>	<b>4-Point Range</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Description</b>
A+	4.00	4.00	95-100	Outstanding - evaluated by instructor
A	4.00	3.85-4.00	90-94.99	Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of the subject matter
A-	3.70	3.50-3.84	85-89.99	Very good performance
B+	3.30	3.15-3.49	80-84.99	Good performance
B	3.00	2.85-3.14	75-79.99	Satisfactory performance
B-	2.70	2.50-2.84	70-74.99	Minimum pass for students in the Faculty of Graduate Studies
C+	2.30	2.15-2.49	65-69.99	All final grades below B- are indicative of failure at the graduate level and cannot be counted toward Faculty of Graduate Studies course requirements.
C	2.00	1.85-2.14	60-64.99	
C-	1.70	1.50-1.84	55-59.99	
D+	1.30	1.15-1.49	50-54.99	
D	1.00	0.50-1.14	45-49.99	
F	0.00	0-0.49	0-44.99	

## Notes:

- A student who receives a "C+" or lower in any one course will be required to withdraw regardless of their grade point average (GPA) unless the program recommends otherwise. If the program permits the student to retake a failed course, the second grade will replace the initial grade in the calculation of the GPA, and both grades will appear on the transcript.

## Notes:

1. Written work, term assignments and other course related work may only be submitted by e-mail if prior permission to do so has been obtained from the course instructor. Submissions must come from an official University of Calgary (ucalgary) email account.
2. Academic Accommodations. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a protected ground other than disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their Instructor or the designated contact person in EVDS, Jennifer Taillefer ([jtaillef@ucalgary.ca](mailto:jtaillef@ucalgary.ca)). Students who require an accommodation unrelated to their coursework or the requirements for a graduate degree, based on a protected ground other than disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to the Vice-Provost (Student Experience). For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](http://www.ucalgary.ca/access/)
3. Plagiarism - Plagiarism involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Most commonly plagiarism exists when:(a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test),(b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,(c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or,(d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course(although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved. While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence. It is recognized that clause (d) does not prevent a graduate student incorporating work previously done by him or her in a thesis. Any suspicion of plagiarism will be reported to the Dean, and dealt with as per the regulations in the University of Calgary Graduate Calendar.
4. Information regarding the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/privacy>) and how this impacts the receipt and delivery of course material
5. Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints>)
6. Safewalk information (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/security/safewalk>)
7. Contact Info for: Student Union (<https://www.su.ucalgary.ca/contact/>); Graduate Student representative( <http://www.ucalgary.ca/gsa/>) and Student Ombudsman's Office (<http://www.ucalgary.ca/ombuds/>).