

University of Calgary
School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape
Center for Civilization

(Agrarian) Ecologies of Eutopia: Ethics + Politics of the Urban

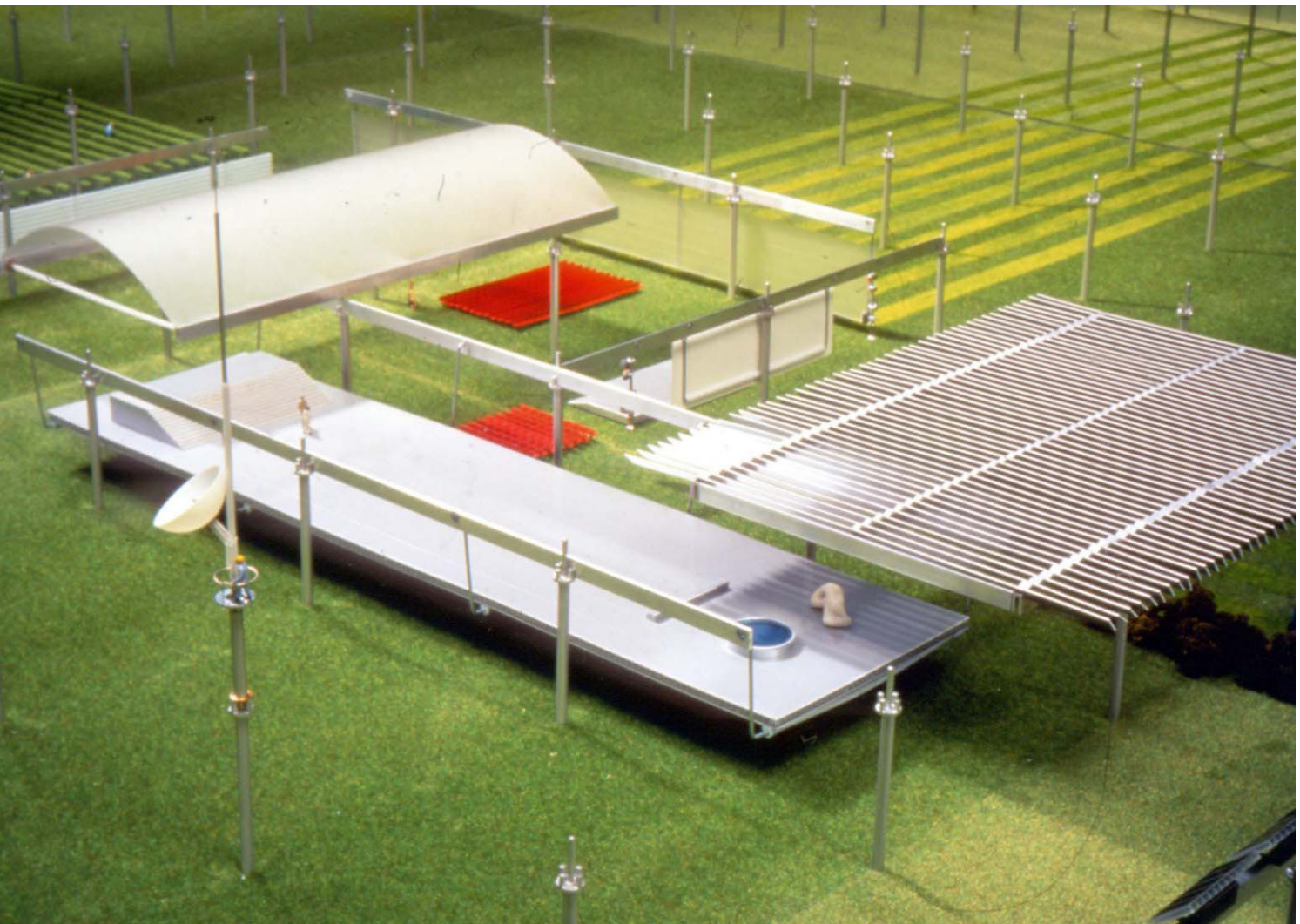
ARCH 680: Special Topics in Architecture

Winter 2023 | M: 10am - 1pm [CBDLab, Classroom C]. Mandatory in-person classes.

INSTRUCTOR:

Prof. Alberto de Salvatierra

Office Hours: by appointment only [PF 3193, online] | alberto.desalvatierr@ucalgary.ca



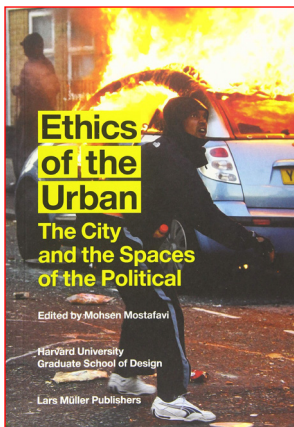
"Agronica," model view, 1993–94. [Andrea Branzi, et. al.]

OVERVIEW

Prevailing discourse on “utopia” is painfully limited by its Eurocentric perspective, while its precedents—burdened by the impossibility of their missions for perfection—are always characterized as failures. From New Harmony in the USA to Auroville in India, the project of utopia is one often seen by the academy with disdain and contempt—how *silly* to try and formulate an “ideal” version of cities, society, and civilization, correct? Surely the plurality of perspectives already present in any one location or the lack of *true* tabula rasa sites anywhere makes the pursuit of utopia a folly for the foolish? Is “utopia” only to exist as a concept of imaginaries in pop-culture and science fiction? The answer is, “No.” In the concise words of queer Irish poet and playwright Oscar Wilde, “*A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realization of Utopias.*”

With this attitude as a departure point, **this discussion-based course will dedicate itself to a critical re-examination of the concept of *eutopia* (meaning “good” place) rather than *utopia* (meaning “no” place).** In addition to reading, assignments will be concerned with the rigorous 3D modeling—Rhinoceros 3D knowledge required—and analysis of select historical precedents on “utopia” while being examined for their possibilities of “eutopia.” A particular emphasis will be placed on the genealogy of the agrarian and the gradient conditions between the “countryside” and the “city” that often pervade the epistemologies of utopias. This design-research will be complemented through in-class discussions that will center contemporary discourse on ethics and politics of the urban with increased attention to matters of equity and justice. A research- and reading-intensive interdisciplinary seminar on topics across architecture, landscape architecture and urban design, **this course will explore the most pressing issues of urbanity today and speculate on how historical formulations of eutopias could inform an optimal-oriented ontology of the urban and the ecologies that constitute it.**

While precedent assignments and precedent-related research will draw from a variety of sources, weekly readings and in-class discussions will be primarily drawn from two required textbooks for this course:



Mohsen Mostafavi (ed), ***Ethics of the Urban: The City and the Spaces of the Political***, Lars Müller Publishers (Zurich), 2017.



Delia Duong Ba Wendel and Fallon Samuels Aidoo (eds), ***Spatializing Politics: Essays on Power and Place***, Harvard University Press (Cambridge), 2015.

This course is supported by the Center for Civilization at the University of Calgary School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape and is part of on-going research initiatives on Solarpunk Urbanism and matters related to architecture as activism, equity and justice in the built environment, and the geopolitics of civilization.

STRUCTURE

This course formally meets 3 hours per week.

At a macro scale, the course is organized in parallel to the two required “textbooks” for the course: 5 class sessions dedicated to ***Ethics of the Urban: The City and the Spaces of the Political*** and 4 class sessions dedicated to ***Spatializing Politics: Essays on Power and Place***. The first and last class session will be dedicated to opening and concluding discussions on the explored themes and geographies.

At a micro scale, this course—as an advanced theory seminar—will follow a repeating basic structure: a live reading of each of the assigned readings will be followed by a group discussion.

Launch: January 09

ETHICS OF THE URBAN: January 16, 23, 30, February 06, 13

-Term Break-

SPATIALIZING POLITICS: February 27, March 06, 20, 27

Wrap-Up: April 03

(AGRARIAN) **ECOLOGIES OF EUTOPIA (Final):** Week of April 10

OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to articulate advanced theoretical arguments derived from a critical approach to the research and analysis of multiple historical, technical, social, political, economic, cultural and environmental contexts. An emphasis will be placed on the value of engaged scholarship and critical inquiry as a means for epistemological exploration. Students will also demonstrate the ability to apply a wide range of communication methods to articulate different organizational modalities of the built and ‘unbuilt’ environments. Finally, students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the need to manage, advocate, and act legally, ethically and critically for the good of the client, society and the environment.

The objectives of the course include:

- Develop the means, methods and mindset to critically consider, compare and evaluate cities and the ethics and politics of the urban..
- Develop knowledge and skills concerning the planning, design and development of urban space and form.
- Develop understanding of the historical evolution of cities, their present circumstances and their emerging trends.
- Develop the ability to be able to research, assess, interpret and advance dimensions of urban design of cities.
- Develop more interdisciplinary, imaginative and team-based approaches to research, planning, design and communication.
- Develop world and self-views concerning urban design and its potential influence and impact upon cities, society and civilization.

SCHEDULE*

This course will take place fully in-person.* Students are required to attend and participate in all synchronous class sessions and to address all asynchronous learning tasks using the One Drive learning environment. If you are unable to participate live due to unforeseen circumstances, please inform the course instructor in advance to work out an alternative participation activity.

<u>LAUNCH</u>	Week 01	09-Jan	LAUNCH, Opening Discussions
EPU1	Week 02	16-Jan	Cities + Citizenship
EPU2	Week 03	23-Jan	Monuments + Memorials
EPU3	Week 04	30-Jan	Neighborhoods + Neighborliness
EPU4	Week 05	06-Feb	Public Space + Public Sphere
EPU5	Week 06	13-Feb	Borders + Boundaries
	Week 07	20-Feb	<i>-Term Break-</i>
SP1	Week 08	27-Feb	Contentious Politics
SP2	Week 09	06-Mar	Politics of Consensus
	Week 10	13-Mar	<i>-Block Week-</i>
SP3	Week 11	20-Mar	Biopolitics
SP4	Week 12	27-Mar	Politics of Expertise
<u>WRAP-UP</u>	Week 13	03-Apr	WRAP-UP, Closing Discussions
(A)EE	Week 14	TBD	(Agrarian) Ecologies of Eutopia: Final

**Note: Due to the participation-based nature of the course, more than 1 unexcused absence will result in failure of the course.*

***Note: For excused absences, class participation can be supplanted with a 2,000 word essay analyzing the week's readings.*

PERCENTAGES

The final course grade will be calculated as follows:

ATTENDANCE: 20%

PARTICIPATION: 50%

TERM PROJECT: 30%

READINGS

This course has two required "textbooks":

- Mohsen Mostafavi (ed), *Ethics of the Urban: The City and the Spaces of the Political*, Lars Müller Publishers (Zurich), 2017.
- Delia Doung Ba Wendel and Fallon Samuels Aidoo (eds), *Spatializing Politics: Essays on Power and Place*, Harvard University Press (Cambridge), 2015.

WEEK 01 LAUNCH

- Mohsen Mostafavi, "Agonistic Urbanism," in Mohsen Mostafavi (ed), *Ethics of the Urban: The City and the Spaces of the Political*, Lars Müller Publishers (Zurich), 2017, pp.9-16.
- Delia Doung Ba Wendel, "Introduction: Toward a Spatial Epistemology of Politics," in Delia Doung Ba Wendel and Fallon Samuels Aidoo (eds), *Spatializing Politics: Essays on Power and Place*, Harvard University Press (Cambridge), 2015, pp. 2-13.

ETHICS OF THE URBAN: THE CITY AND THE SPACES OF THE POLITICAL**WEEK 02 CITIES + CITIZENSHIP**

- Saskia Sassen, "Beyond Differences of Race, Religion, Class: Making Urban Subjects," pp. 35-46.
- Erik Swyngedouw, "Insurgent Urbanity and the Political City," pp. 47-74.
- Robert J. Sampson, "The Fair City: Can We Design Neighborhood Equality?" pp. 75-80.
- Michelle Provoost, "Bottom-Up Is Not Enough," pp. 81-83.

WEEK 03 MONUMENTS + MEMORIALS

- Erika Naginski, "The Public Image of Demos," pp. 87-106.
- Michael Arad, "The Sacred, the Quotidian, and the World Trade Center Memorial," pp. 107-125.
- Krzysztof Wodiczko, "Art, Trauma, and Parrhesia," pp. 126-146.
- Jean-Louis Cohen, "German Visions of Marseille (1926-1943): Modern Stage or Place of Perdition?" pp. 147-162.

WEEK 04 NEIGHBORHOODS + NEIGHBORLINESS

- Diane Davis, "Urban Protest and the Built Environment Foundations of Insurgency and Citizenship," pp. 165-194.
- Loïc Wacquant, "Urban Desolation and Symbolic Denigration in the Hyperghetto," pp. 195-205.

WEEK 05 PUBLIC SPACE + PUBLIC SPHERE

- Chantal Mouffe, "Radical Politics as Counter-Hegemonic Intervention: The Role of Cultural Practices," pp. 209-231.
- Keller Easterling, "Matrix Space," pp. 232-257.

WEEK 06 BORDERS + BOUNDARIES

- Richard Sennett, "Edges: Self and City," pp. 261-268.
- Gerald Frug, "The Ethics of Charter Cities," pp. 269-295.
- Guilherme Wisnik, "The New Urban Brazil and Its Margins," pp. 296-323.

WEEK 07 *No readings.*

SPATIALIZING POLITICS: ESSAYS ON POWER AND PLACE

WEEK 08 CONTENTIOUS POLITICS

- Margo Shea, "‘There Were Streets’: Urban Renewal and the Early Troubles in London/Derry, Northern Ireland," pp. 19-48.
- Kerry Ryan Chance, "Slum as Infrastructure: How the Politics of Informality Shapes South Africa’s World-Class Cities," pp. 51-81.
- Anh-Thu Ngo, "Political Ground and Spatial Stakes in Ho Chin Minh City, Vietnam," pp.85-112.

WEEK 09 POLITICS OF CONSENSUS

- Delia Duong Ba Wendel, "Imagining Spaces of Peace and Conflict in the Rwandan Radio Drama *Musekweya*," pp. 119-150.
- Fallon Samuels Aidoo, "The Right-of-Way: Critical Infrastructure for the Right to Work in Postwar Philadelphia," pp. 153-182.
- Ryne Clos, "The Volcanic Heart of Nicaragua: Tiscapa and the Spatiality of Political Culture, 1936-1990," pp. 185-210.

WEEK 10 *No readings.*

WEEK 11 BIOPOLITICS

- Joy Knoblauch, "The Permeable Institution: Community Mental Health Centers as Governmental Technology, 1963-1974," pp. 217-240.
- Melany Sun-Min Park, "Imprisoned Bodies: North Korea and its *Kwan-li-so*," pp. 243-270.
- Wanda Katja Liebermann, "The Right to Live in the World: Architecture, Inclusion, and the Americans with Disabilities Act," pp. 273-300.

WEEK 12 POLITICS OF EXPERTISE

- Orly Linovski, "Epistemologies of Public and Private Urban Design Expertise," pp. 307-333.
- Michael Mendez, "From the Street: Civic Epistemologies of Urban Climate Change," pp. 337-364.
- H. Fernando Burga, "Immigrant Spatial Politics in Metropolitan Miami, 1957-2005," pp. 367-399.
- Fallon Samuels Aidoo, "Afterword: A Conversation with Toni L. Griffin," pp. 400-403.

WEEK 13 *No readings.*

WEEK 14 *No readings.*

**CACB PERFORMANCE
CRITERIA**

The following CACB Student Performance Criteria are covered in this course at a primary level:

- A1: Design Theories, Precedents + Methods;
- A6: Urban Design;
- B1: Critical Thinking and Communication;
- B3: Architectural Theory;
- B4: Cultural Diversity + Global Perspectives.

The following CACB Student Performance Criteria are covered in this course at a secondary level:

- B2: Architectural History
- B5: Ecological Systems;
- E2: Ethical + Legal Responsibilities.

**TECHNOLOGY
REQUIREMENTS**

To successfully engage in their learning experiences at the University of Calgary, students taking online, remote and blended courses are required to have reliable access to the following technology:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Webcam (built-in or external);
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone;
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Broadband internet connection.

**SOFTWARE
REQUIREMENTS**

This course will also require specific software which includes, but is not limited to:

- Rhinoceros 3D;
- Adobe Suite (primarily Photoshop, Illustrator, InDesign and After Effects);
- Microsoft Word; and,
- One Drive.

**ZOOM USE +
PROTOCOLS**

Zoom is a video conferencing program that will allow us to meet at specific times for a "live" video conference, so that we can have the opportunity to meet each other virtually and discuss relevant course topics as a learning community.

To help ensure Zoom sessions are private, do not share the Zoom link or password with others, or on any social media platforms. Zoom links and passwords are only intended for students registered in the course. Zoom recordings and materials presented in Zoom, including any teaching materials, must not be shared, distributed or published without the instructor's permission.

The use of video conferencing programs relies on participants to act ethically, honestly and with integrity; and in accordance with the principles of fairness, good faith, and respect (as per the Code of Conduct). When entering Zoom

or other video conferencing sessions (such as MS Teams), you play a role in helping create an effective, safe and respectful learning environment. Please be mindful of how your behaviour in these sessions may affect others. Participants are required to use names officially associated with their UCID (legal or preferred names listed in the Student Centre) when engaging in these activities. Instructors/moderators can remove those whose names do not appear on class rosters. Non-compliance may be investigated under relevant University of Calgary conduct policies (e.g Student Non-Academic Misconduct Policy). If participants have difficulties complying with this requirement, they should email the instructor of the class explaining why, so the instructor may consider whether to grant an exception, and on what terms. For more information on how to get the most out of your zoom sessions visit: <https://elearn.ucalgary.ca/guidelines-for-zoom/>

If you are unable to attend a Zoom session, please contact your instructor in advance to arrange an alternative activity for the missed session (e.g., to review the recorded session). Please be prepared, as best as you are able, to join class in a quiet space that will allow you to be fully present and engaged in Zoom sessions. Students will be advised by their instructor when they are expected to turn on their webcam (for group work, presentations, etc.).

The instructor may record online Zoom class sessions for the purposes of supporting student learning in this class—such as making the recording available for review of the session or for students who miss a session. Students will be advised before the instructor initiates a recording of a Zoom session. These recordings will be used to support student learning only and will not be shared or used for any other purpose.

ASSESSMENT INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION EXPECTATIONS

Attendance for the full duration of each class session is mandatory. Students are expected to attend and come prepared to all class sessions. This includes producing content necessary for discussion and contributing to individual and class-wide discussions. Class sessions will take place in-person, but if necessary, might be supplanted through Zoom. If so, Zoom links will be provided by the instructor.

FINAL PRESENTATION

Attendance and participation for the entire final presentation is mandatory. All required deliverables must be included and presented in a way that legibly demonstrates the student's understanding.

EXPECTATIONS FOR WRITING

Written work presented in the course, and submitted to One Drive should meet standards for peer reviewed submissions. For more information, please visit: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-2.html>

**EVALUATION
CRITERIA**

The following criteria are used for evaluating your work, both regarding helping your progress and in final grading:

- Idea: How clearly are you articulating your conceptual intentions?
- Translation of ideas: How well are you using your concepts to develop and articulate your ideas.
- Appropriate Representation: How well matched is your choice of representational means to your intentions?
- Representation Quality: How accomplished are you with analog and digital drawing, physical modeling and digital representation? To what degree do your representations convey what they ought to?
- Oral Presentation Skills: How clearly are you presenting your ideas, whether at your desk, in class discussions, or to a formal jury?
- Participation in Discussions: How actively and how constructively are you involved in class discussions, both formally and informally?
- Response to Criticism: How do you effectively take advantage of criticism from instructors, your classmates, and outside jurors?
- Self Evaluation Skills: To what extent are you able to critique your own work regularly for a more defined and progressive design?



Greta Thunberg leading a climate demonstration in 2019 in Berlin. Michael Kappeler, Getty Images.

GRADING

Grades will be cumulative through the semester. Students are expected to meet all requirements for each assignment to receive a passing grade. In general grades will be based on the following (depending on the topic and the assignment): development (process) 30%, conclusion (product) 30%, presentation 20%, graphic design 20%. Attendance and active participation in all components of the course are essential.

GRADING SCALE*

Grade	Grade Point Value	4-Point Range	Percent	Description
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	

***NOTE:** Passing grades must be achieved on all assignments weighted over 30% of the total course assessment. 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. Students are expected to complete all course assignments on time. There will be no final exam. Students must obtain an overall passing grade to pass this course, however, if a student fails any phase of the course worth 30% or more they will fail the course. A student who feels that a piece of graded term work (term paper, essay, test, etc.) has been unfairly graded may request to have the paper re-graded. The student shall discuss the work with the instructor within fifteen days of being notified of the mark or of the item's return to the class. More information can be found in the Graduate Calendar: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/grad/current/gs-o.html>

SPECIAL NOTES

The course instructor reserves the right to change, modify or revise the content of the syllabus as well as the calendar at any given time during the semester.

All work produced within the context of University of Calgary School of Architecture, Planning and Landscape course becomes and remains the property of the school for use in documenting student work for accreditation. All work must be documented for your personal use prior to its final submittal.

**CONTACT
INFORMATION**

Please contact the course instructor directly with any questions or concerns. Office hours and meetings are by appointment only.

**UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY POLICIES +
SUPPORTS**

COVID-19 PROCEDURE FOR SICK STUDENTS

<https://ucalgary.ca/risk/sites/default/files/Covid-19%20Folder/COVID-19-Procedure-for-Sick-Students.pdf>

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The Student Accommodations policy is available at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/access/prospective-students/academic-accommodations>.

Students needing an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf>). Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than Disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit www.ucalgary.ca/access/.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior which compromises proper assessment of a student's academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

For information on the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and Procedure please visit:

<https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-policy.pdf>

<https://ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-academic-misconduct-procedure.pdf>

Additional information is available on the Academic Integrity Website at <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/student-success/learning/academic-integrity>.

COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION

All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf) and requirements of the copyright act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>).

INSTRUCTOR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PROTECTION OF PRIVACY

Student information will be collected in accordance with typical (or usual) classroom practice. Students' assignments will be accessible only by the authorized course faculty. Private information related to the individual student is treated with the utmost regard by the faculty at the University of Calgary.

MEDIA AND RECORDING

University Calendar: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html>

Recording of lectures (other than audio recordings that are pre-arranged as part of an authorized accommodation) is not permitted. Students may not record any portion of a lecture, class discussion or course-related learning activity without the prior and explicit written permission of the course instructor or authorization from Student Accessibility Services. For any other use, whether by duplication, transcription, publication, sale or transfer of recordings, written approval must be obtained from the instructor for the specific use proposed. Any use other than that described above constitutes academic misconduct and may result in suspension or expulsion.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE POLICY

The University recognizes that all members of the University Community should be able to learn, work, teach and live in an environment where they are free from harassment, discrimination, and violence. The University of

Calgary's sexual violence policy guides us in how we respond to incidents of sexual violence, including supports available to those who have experienced or witnessed sexual violence, or those who are alleged to have committed sexual violence. It provides clear response procedures and timelines, defines complex concepts, and addresses incidents that occur off-campus in certain circumstances. Please see the policy available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/sexual-violence-policy.pdf>

UNIVERSITY STUDENT APPEALS OFFICE

If a student has a concern about the course, academic matter, or a grade that they have been assigned, they must first communicate this concern with the instructor. If the concern cannot be resolved with the instructor, the student can proceed with an academic appeal, which normally begins with the Faculty. <https://www.ucalgary.ca/secretariat/student-appeals>

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

Please visit the Registrar's website at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines> for additional important information on the following:

- Wellness and Mental Health Resources
- Student Success
- Student Ombuds Office
- Student Union (SU) Information
- Graduate Students' Association (GSA) Information
- Emergency Evacuation/Assembly Points
- Safewalk