



COURSE OUTLINE
ACTIVISM & COMMUNITY BASED PLANNING

Thurs 2:30 p.m. - 5:20 p.m.

MAC D111

ANOTHER CITY IS POSSIBLE! DESIGNING EMANCIPATION THROUGH PLANNING FROM BELOW

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on activism and community based planning from a radical perspective. It investigates how the planning of urban space has been critiqued in the literature and the everyday approaches to planning that have been employed by individuals and communities. In challenging rigid and modernist approaches to planning theory we will examine key themes, concepts, and theories which define the study of planning theory from what can be considered an anarchistic, or anti-authoritarian perspective. You can expect to gain a critical understanding of and appreciation for emancipatory approaches to planning theory, which will allow students to consider alternative configurations of space and power in keeping with the course's radical approach.

As a fourth-year course, our approach within the classroom will be largely theoretical, where you are required to think critically about the concepts we explore through your engagement with the readings and during our meetings. At the same time, the course involves a hands-on component that requires you to directly engage with the community on a topic or issue of your choosing. This two-sided approach is considered an important pedagogical exercise in that it breaks down the proverbial "Ivory Tower" in bringing theory outside of the academy and into our shared streets and neighborhoods. The course itself is run as a seminar, which means that it requires your active participation.

KEY THEMES: anarchism; direct action; community gardening; homelessness; occupy; public space; right to the city; radical democracy; urban planning

REQUIRED TEXTS

Ferrell, J. 2001. *Tearing Down the Streets: Adventures in Urban Anarchy*. New York: Palgrave.

Hern, M. 2010. *Common Ground In a Liquid City: In Defense of an Urban Future*. Oakland: AK Press.

RECOMMENDED TEXT

The Trapeze Collective (Bryan, K., Chatterton, P., and Cutler, A.). 2007. *Do It Yourself: A Handbook for Changing Our World*. London: Pluto Press.

EVALUATION

Class Participation & Pop Quizzes	15%
Book Review	15%
Activist Field Journal	40%
Group Presentation	30%

PREREQUISITE: One of GEOG 340, 343, or 355.

**OFFICE HOURS
& LOCATION**

Tuesday 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m
DTB B310
Telephone: 250-721-7340
Email: springer@uvic.ca

GEOGRAPHY DEPARTMENT INFO

- Geography Department website: <http://geography.uvic.ca>
- Undergraduate Advisor: Dr. Phil Wakefield - philw@geog.uvic.ca
- Graduate Advisor: Dennis Jelinski - jelinski@office.geog.uvic.ca

COURSESPACES

I will post the course syllabus, outlines of slide presentations, and any additional relevant materials on the course's CourseSpaces website.

POLICY ON LATE ASSIGNMENTS

- Assignments submitted **ON TIME** will receive my full attention & useful feedback.
- Please speak with me well in advance if you anticipate a delay in submitting your work, particularly when dealing with illness or family conflicts.
- 5% per day penalty for late assignments including weekend days. For example, 5% will be deducted from the assignment (due in class) *if the assignment is submitted later in the day*. If the assignment is submitted the next day, 10% will be deducted from the assigned grade, and so forth.
- **Assignments submitted more than one week late will NOT be graded.**
- You may submit assignments electronically to meet a deadline but a hard copy **MUST** be submitted as soon as possible afterwards for marking. If a hard copy is not submitted, your assignment will **NOT** be marked.

** All assignments must be done exclusively for this course.

PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism in writing term papers will not be tolerated. Plagiarism detection software will be used in case of doubt. Plagiarism means representing someone else's work as your own. It is a serious offence, punishable by academic sanctions. When you incorporate the words, ideas, graphics, or other products from someone else's work into your projects, you must give credit by providing a citation and reference to the source work.

It is your responsibility to:

- understand what plagiarism is,
- be familiar with and understand the information on plagiarism outlined in UVic Libraries' plagiarism policy at <http://library.uvic.ca/instruction/cite/plagiarism.html>
- be familiar with UVic's policies on student responsibilities, conduct, discipline, and academic offences, as described in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Students are reminded that submitting for credit any academic work which has been submitted (or where credit has already been obtained) in another course is listed among academic offences.

RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCE

Please notify me immediately once you know that any date proposed for assignments or papers conflict with dates of special significance in your religion. We will arrange alternative dates to accommodate individual needs.

ACCESSIBILITY

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Resource Centre for Students with a Disability (RCSD) as soon as possible. The RCSD staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations <http://rcsd.uvic.ca/>. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

POSITIVITY AND SAFETY

The University of Victoria is committed to promoting, providing and protecting a positive and safe learning and working environment for all its members.

Discriminatory language is not welcome or tolerated in lectures, seminars, tutorials, or written work. This includes but is not limited to sexist, racist, ethnocentric, or homophobic language.

GRADING SYSTEM

As per the 2014-2015 Academic Calendar:

Grade	Grade point value	Grade scale	Description
A+ A A-	9 8 7	90-100% 85-89% 80-84%	Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.
B+ B B-	6 5 4	77-79% 73-76% 70-72%	Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.
C+ C	3 2	65-69% 60-64%	Satisfactory , or minimally satisfactory . These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.
D	1	50-59%	Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.
F	0	0-49%	Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.

Course Experience Survey (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

ASSESSMENT & ASSIGNMENT DETAILS

CLASS PARTICIPATION & POP QUIZZES - (15%)

DUE DATE: ONGOING THROUGHOUT TERM

- This includes engaging in discussion, asking questions, offering answers, and active listening, where none is prioritized over the others. You are expected to regularly attend classes, show up to class prepared, and remain committed to and engaged with the course materials throughout the term. Pop quizzes will keep you on your toes and, I hope, ensure you remain committed all semester.

CRITICAL THINKING BOOK REVIEW - (15%)

DUE DATES: February 25th

LENGTH: 2-3 PAGES (approximately 500-750 words)

- Each student is asked to read, reflect upon and review ONE of the following two texts: Jeff Ferrell's *Tearing Down the Streets: Adventures in Urban Anarchy* and Matt Hern's *Common Ground In a Liquid City: In Defense of an Urban Future*. Both of these books bring a new and radical perspective on the urban experience and have considerable implications for how urban planning is conceptualized and importantly how it might be re-imagined.
- Your task is to review the thesis or main argument of the book you choose and critically evaluate it from a planning perspective by assessing its major strengths and weaknesses. Your review should go beyond simply reiterating what the book is about, and ideally will include your own critical reflections on the issues covered in each book, which might include a commentary on how the text challenges conventional thinking about planning.

ACTIVIST FIELD JOURNAL - (40%)

DUE DATE: March 17th

LENGTH: VARIABLE

- You are asked to form into small groups of approximately 3 or 4 individuals and choose a Direct Action/Volunteer project of your choice. The project you choose to engage can be related to any issue facing Greater Victoria that touches upon or relates to urban planning and design. You are free to build your own project from the ground up, or you may join an existing organization and become involved in their activities. The overarching purpose is for you to get involved with your community at a grassroots level and try to implement or be part of some element of change for the greater good of the city in which you currently live. Your approach will necessarily involve a "do-it-yourself" ethic, and the Trapeze Collective handbook is there to help guide you in your endeavor. Although you are by no means limited, the following list is some potential Direct Action Projects and/or Volunteer Opportunities that you might like to become involved with:

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|---|---|
| 1. Food Not Bombs | 19. Co-Ops (Food, Housing, Child Care) |
| 2. Critical Mass | 20. Community Gardens |
| 3. Action Committee of People with Disabilities | 21. Victoria Permaculture |
| 4. Spring Ridge Commons | 22. Car Free Day |
| 5. Radical Cheerleading | 23. Harm Reduction Victoria |
| 6. Resistance is Fertile / Food Not Lawns | 24. Take Back the Night |
| 7. Victoria Coalition Against Poverty | 25. Camas Books, Infoshop & Freeskool |
| 8. Mural Programs or Reverse Graffiti | 26. People's Assembly of Victoria |
| 9. Greater Victoria Coalition to End Homelessness | 27. Victoria Native Friendship Centre |
| 10. PARK(ing) Day | 28. Big Sleepout / Vigil for the Homeless |

11. Victoria Pride Society
12. World Naked Bike Ride
13. Allies of Drug War Survivors
14. Freecycling & Free Store
15. Transition Victoria
16. Taking Back the Space Festival
17. Bike-sharing Program
18. Recyclistas Used Bike Collective

29. Passed Up (UVSS)
30. Safer for All – Stop the Policing of Poverty
31. Society of Living Intravenous Drug Users
32. Flash Mobs & Street Theatre
33. Freeganism & Dumpster Diving Meetups
34. Victoria Anarchist Bookfair
35. Pedal to Petal
36. Really Really Free Market

- Throughout the duration of the course you and your group members will be required to actively engage with your project through volunteer work or by designing and implementing your project. This will necessarily involve a great deal of organization, planning, and dedication on your part in realizing the full potential of your project's goals. During our weekly meetings we will set aside time for groups to meet, share ideas, and reflect upon the process of volunteering and organizing for direct action.
- Your assignment itself will be to keep a field journal of your experience. I would encourage you to think of this as an 'ideas book', rather than a traditional journal or diary. It provides you with an opportunity to engage in critical and reflexive thinking about your project, and more broadly, the design and planning of cities. There is no set structure for the Field Journal and I simply encourage you to write up your experiences, reflecting in any way you want on what you have participated in, your reactions to it, and how it has affected you. You might consider including some of the following: self-learning objectives, lecture/discussion notes that you have kept; commentary on brainstorming and designing the project; general reflections on urban planning and design that you have observed in Victoria, in your own home city, or on your travels; self-expression of ideas stemming from reading articles and books; copies of official urban plans and maps and/or sketches of those that you have made yourself; and photographs linked to urban planning and design issues.
- Ultimately, I view this as an opportunity for you to get creative and have fun! Accordingly, in addition to your written reflections and the ideas I have already suggested, I encourage you to also include, poems, songs, anecdotes, drawings, paintings, links to videos you have made, crafts, sculptures, newspaper clippings, cartoons, sketches, collages, or any other creative outlet you can imagine that will help you represent your experience. You have complete freedom here to express yourself and demonstrate your own creativity so long as it relates in some way to interpreting the 'urban scene' ... so just run with it!

GROUP PRESENTATION - (30%)

DUE DATE: MARCH 17th & 24th

LENGTH: 20 to 25 MINUTES

- Students are asked to collaborate in preparing a presentation on the Direct Action/Volunteer initiative they have engaged in. Your collective role is to reflect thoroughly on your shared experiences, offering some indication of both the difficulties you have encountered and the successes that you have achieved. I encourage you to relate your activist engagements to the theoretical concerns covered in the course by addressing the intersections with some of the assigned readings. You should also seek to engage the class with reflections and/or lessons on the importance of 'planning from below' that can be drawn out of your chosen form of community engagement. Reflect on how the experience has contributed to your own personal development as well as what it has meant to the community with which you have engaged. In other words, I'd like you to show us how another city really is possible!
- You have complete artistic freedom with your presentations and accordingly how you choose to present to the class is entirely up to you. You might have us watch a film, or even create your own film, and then ask us questions that help us to think about the issue with which your group has engaged. You might want to write and then read poetry that addresses your project, or do a short play that helps us think about the ideas you have been engaging with all semester. You can make a poster presentation, or present a piece of art or music you have created in response to the experiences you have had, or even use music that someone else has created if it helps you (and hopefully us) to think about and understand the issues that your group has addressed. You can include personal photographs, home videos, scrapbooks etc. and use them to explain and demonstrate your project.

Maybe you want to create a website to share your experiences, or perhaps you have done some paintings or sketches that you want us to consider. If you opt for the conventional approach, and simply want to give us a Power Point presentation, that's fine too. Your options are limited only by your own imagination, and I encourage as much creativity as possible! Wherever your interest and talent lies, I'm all for it! The only fixed criterion is that you have approximately 20 to 25 minutes to share your creativity, reflections, and ideas about your experiences with us.

IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT NOTES:

Assignment: For all assignments use 12 pt. font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, number pages, and a list of references. **DO NOT include a title page** (save paper!), but **DO** include your title, your name, my name, the course number, and the date at the top of the first page. Staple your paper in the top left corner (**NO FANCY BINDERS!!!**). Please follow the word length requirement.

Referencing: Students are required to follow a standard referencing style, using in text citations and bibliography (usually AUTHOR-DATE in human geography). Exact formatting can be of your own choice, but please examine and follow a geography journal such as Annals of the Association of American Geographers, Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, or Progress in Human Geography for examples of proper citation styles.

WEEKLY CALENDAR
(Subject to revision as the course proceeds)

WEEK	DATE	SEMINAR TOPICS
1	JANUARY 7	Approaches to Urban Planning & Design
2	JANUARY 14	Radical Planning
3	JANUARY 21	Anarchism and Geography
4	JANUARY 28	Anarchist Perspectives on Urban Planning
5	FEBRUARY 4	Direct Action & Civil Disobedience
6	FEBRUARY 11	READING BREAK NO CLASSES
7	FEBRUARY 18	Radical Democracy & Urban (Dis)order
8	FEBRUARY 25	Reclaiming the Commons
9	MARCH 3	Autonomous Zones
10	MARCH 10	Homelessness & Hunger
11	MARCH 17	CLASS PRESENTATIONS
12	MARCH 24	CLASS PRESENTATIONS
13	MARCH 31	NO CLASSES

REQUIRED WEEKLY READINGS

(Subject to revision as the course proceeds)

- JANUARY 7 **Approaches to Urban Planning & Design**
- Allmendinger, P. 2002. Towards a post-positivist typology of planning theory. *Planning Theory*, 1: 77-99.
- Ward, C. 2011. "The future of the design professions", in *Autonomy, Solidarity, Possibility: The Colin Ward Reader*, Wilbert C. and White D. F. (eds). Oakland: AK Press, pp. 129-132.
- JANUARY 14 **Radical Planning**
- Friedmann, J. 1987. "The mediations of radical planning", in *Planning in the Public Domain: From Knowledge to Action*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 389-412.
- Grabow, S. and Heskin, A. 1973. Foundations for a radical concept of planning. *Journal of the American Institute of Planners* 39: 106-114.
- JANUARY 21 **Anarchism and Geography**
- Springer, S. 2012. Anarchism! What geography still ought to be. *Antipode*. 44: 1605-1624.
- Springer, S. 2014. Why a radical geography must be anarchist. *Dialogues in Human Geography*. 4: 249-270.
- JANUARY 28 **Anarchist Perspectives on Urban Planning**
- Hall, P. 2002. "The Anarchist Roots of the Planning Movement", In *Cities of Tomorrow: An Intellectual History of Urban Planning and Design in the Twentieth Century*, 3rd Edition. Malden, MA: Blackwell, pp. 3.
- Ward, C. 2001. "Who is to plan?", in *Anarchy in Action*. London: Freedom Press, pp. 59-66.
- Ward, C. 2011. "An anarchist approach to urban planning", in *Autonomy, Solidarity, Possibility: The Colin Ward Reader*, Wilbert C. and White D. F. (eds). Oakland: AK Press, pp. 303-310.
- FEBRUARY 4 **Direct Action & Civil Disobedience**
- Brannigan, J. 2005. "Direct action gets the goods." *Working Class Resistance*, 10. <http://libcom.org/library/direct-action-gets-goods>
- Graeber, D. 2009. "Direct action, anarchism, direct democracy", in *Direct Action: An Ethnography*. Oakland: AK Press, pp. 201-237
- Sans-Titres Bulletin 1. 1999. "What is direct action?" *A-Infos News*. <http://www.ainfos.ca/99/nov/ainfos00282.html>
- FEBRUARY 11 **READING BREAK NO CLASSES**
- FEBRUARY 18 **Radical Democracy & Urban (Dis)order**
- Graeber, D. 2011. Occupy Wall Street's anarchist roots. *Aljazeera*. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/11/2011112872835904508.html>
- Pinder, D. 2005. Modernist calls to order, in *Visions of the City: Utopianism, Power, and Politics in Twentieth Century Urbanism*. New York: Taylor and Francis, pp. 57-88.
- Springer, S. 2011. Public space as emancipation: meditations on anarchism, radical democracy, neoliberalism and violence. *Antipode*, 43: 525-562.

FEBRUARY 25

Reclaiming the Commons

Harvey, D. "The creation of the urban commons", in *Rebel Cities: From the Right to the City to the Urban Revolution*. New York: Verso, pp. 67-88.

McKay, I. 2012. "What about the "Tragedy of the Commons"?", in *An Anarchist FAQ*, Volume 2. Oakland: AK Press. <http://anarchism.pageabode.com/afaq/secl6.html>

Ward, C. 2011. "The land is whose?" in *Autonomy, Solidarity, Possibility: The Colin Ward Reader*, Wilbert C. and White D. F. (eds). Oakland: AK Press, pp. 175-183.

MARCH 3

Autonomous Zones

Newman, S. 2011. Postanarchism and space: revolutionary fantasies and autonomous zones. *Planning Theory*, 10, 344-365.

Pickerill, J. and Chatterton, P. 2006. Notes towards autonomous geographies: creation, resistance and self-management as survival tactics. *Progress in Human Geography*, 30:730-746

MARCH 10

Homelessness & Hunger

Amster, R. "Facing the 'homelessness problem': subsistence, survival, and Skid Row", in *Lost in Space: The Criminalization, Globalization, and Urban Ecology of Homelessness*. El Paso, TX: LFB Scholarly Publishing, pp. 1-42.

Heynen, N. 2010. Cooking up non-violent civil-disobedient direct action for the hungry: 'Food Not Bombs' and the resurgence of radical democracy in the US. *Urban Studies*, 47: 1225-1240.

MARCH 17

CLASS PRESENTATIONS

MARCH 24

CLASS PRESENTATIONS

MARCH 31

NO CLASS