USC MRED 574: Building Typology Syllabus

Instructor

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Class Location
VPD 110

Class Meetings

Wednesday 6:00 – 7:50 pm

Office Hours

By arrangement on Wednesday afternoon. Contact Shawn Godkin.

Course Overview

The built landscape comprises seemingly endless variety, yet certain buildings can be distinguished by similarities that give them a family resemblance. There are numerous means to categorize built form, with perhaps the most common being a functional typology. Those spaces that serve the same purpose in society are called by the same name, such as house, store, office building, museum, and so forth, even though the variations in any category are tremendous. Still, the members of a class share certain fundamental features, so that we are confused when a gas station becomes a dry cleaner, or a home becomes a restaurant.

In this course, we will examine the role of physical design in relation to fundamental building types in order to understand the primary design and planning issues and to learn to evaluate any design. This semester we will survey four principal building types of real estate development: residential housing, offices, retail, and mixed use. We will also look at the typology of "civic" space and will also pay special attention to parking, a typology central to current planning and one that is expected to be in transition for the near future.

Site visits (via Zoom), lectures, slide presentations, assignments, and readings will focus on these building families, their fundamental ordering principles, and the most common subtypes. We will look at design prototypes, i.e., buildings that are canonical in their families. The focus will be on the physical patterns the building types embody at the level of the urban context, the street, the site, and the building form and organization. For each building type, we will explore the criteria for good design and the foundations for such an evaluation.

Patterns among buildings reflect their fundamental nature, as well as conventions that change over time. Conventions dictate rules of thumb that we use to plan development projects, and they are driven by systems as diverse as lending agencies, properties of the available structural technology, and social trends. We will also explore current conventional wisdom about the various building types.

The course is intended to introduce students to a fuller understanding of any single building, in its city, for its intended purpose, so that they will approach any development undertaking with informed judgment about its design. We will explicitly examine the relationship between good design and good business in development, to determine if and when architectural quality contributes to the success of a project.

Site Visits:

Because certain aspects about design in development can be best learned through "hands-on" or direct experience, three field trips have been scheduled. On each trip, we will visit an example of one building type. Case study materials have been gathered about each site to prepare students to analyze the role of design in the particular development undertaking. During each site visit, the Developer and/or Architect team will meet with us to answer questions and to explain the project in further depth.

Grading

Your grade will be based on the following:

15%	Participation
35%	Assignments
20%	Mid-Term
30%	Final Exam
100%	

Attendance

1. Unless students provide an accommodation letter from USC's Office of Student Accessibility Services, attendance and active participation is expected in the classroom.

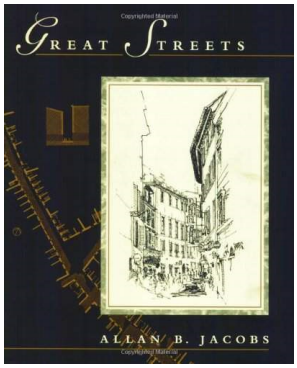
2. Any student with such accommodations should submit their accommodation document to instructor as soon as possible to discuss appropriate accommodations. Either classroom recordings or live remote access to the class via Zoom will be provided.

3. Students who are experiencing illness should not attend class in person. Student must inform instructor in advance of any class sessions they cannot attend for medical reasons and accommodations will be arranged to view recorded lectures and submit alternatives to any missed class participation. Students will not be penalized for not attending class in-person under these circumstances.

(Attendance will be recorded)

Assignments:

All assignments to be prepared on 11" x 17" scaled format.



Recommended Book List

1. The Next American Metropolis, by Peter Calthorpe, Princeton Architectural Press.
2. Common Place: Toward Neighborhood and Regional Design, by Douglas Keilbaugh, University of Washington Press, 1997.
3. Great Streets, by Allan B. Jacobs, MIT Press, 1993.
4. Rediscovering the Center City, by William H. Whyte, Doubleday.
5. Place Making, Developing Town Centers, Main Streets and Urban Villages, ULI 2002, by Charles Bohl
6. Density by Design, by Steven Fader, Urban Land Institute, 2000.
7. From Line to Design: Design/Graphics/Communication, by Scott Van Dyke.
8. Halfway to Everywhere, by William H. Hudnut III, ULI 2003
9. Mixed Use Development Handbook; Community Builders Handbook Series.
10. Residential Development Handbook; Community Builders Handbook Series.

11.. Transforming Suburban Business Districts, ULI – 2001

12.. Zero Lot Line Housing, by David R. Jensen/HOH Associates.

13. Developing Sustainable Planned Communities, ULI 2007 by Franko, Gause, Heid, Kellenberg, et al.

Course Schedule (Tentative and subject to revision). Classes are currently scheduled in VPD 110. Field Trips will be on various sites in Los Angeles.

Class Date	Subject	Assignments, Readings, Exams
August 25	Introduction to Typologies	Syllabus and Places
September 1	Parking Lecture	Initiate Parking Assignment
September 8	Office Lecture, Construction Types	Initiate Office Assignment
September 15	**Field Trip: Commercial Project**	**Location: TBD, Hollywood**
September 22	Retail and Guest lecture by Sadé Holtz	Turn in Office Assignment
September 29	Residential Densities, Part 1 (D. Gehman)	Initiate Residential Assignment
October 6	**Field Trip: Residential Project**	**Location: Chinatown LA**
October 13	**ULI – No Class**	
October 20	Residential Densities, Part 2, Review	Turn in Residential Assignment
October 27	Mid-Term Examination	
November 3	Mixed Use and Guest Lecture	Initiate Mixed-Use Assignment
November 10	**Field Trip: Mixed-Use Project**	**Location: TBD West LA**
November 17	Mixed Use Trends (Daniel Gehman)	Turn in Mixed Use Assignment
November 24	**Thanksgiving Break**	
December 1	Civic Space, Site Planning Intro, Review	Reference Compendium
December 8	**Final Exam**	Final Exam