Course Description: This is the capstone course in Urban Studies. It is designed to produce
a final project demonstrating analytic skills, factual knowledge and the creative impulses of
students finishing their degrees as urban studies majors. Each year the course is organized
around a particular theme which students will study from the perspective of their area of
expertise: urban planning, urban management, environmental policy and management,
historic preservation, gis, or general urban studies.

Sustainable Communities: Perception and Presentation is this year’s theme. The purpose
of the class will be to explore how “sustainable” and “community” are used, to analyze the
politics of a particular use and/or to prepare alternative presentations. If “sustainable” and
“community” are well worn phrases and widely accepted as being about desirable outcomes,
that leaves open questions about HOW they are used in the many contexts in which they
appear. It also leaves open questions about how sustainable and community might be al-
ready be PRACTICED and also how they might be IMAGINED. How the terms are deployed
raises questions of perception (or conceptualization). Finding everyday sustainable prac-
tices and communities or imagining what these might be like, if they were to exist, raises
issues of presentaton. Students will address these issues with a project of their own inven-
tion. As a whole the class will produce interwoven sets of case analyses, descriptions of
practices and creative presentations.
Together the class projects should be thought of as a book with the individual projects as chapters. Several models for this are “Strangely Familiar: Narratives of Architecture in the City” (Edited by Iain Borden, Joe Kerr, Alician Pivaro, Jane Rendell. Designed by Studio Myerscough. London: Routledge 1996) “Mutations” (Harvard Project on the City, Barcelona: Actan) “Encountering Urban Places: Visual and Material Performances in the City” (edited by Lars Frers and Lars Meier. Hampshire: Ashgate Press 2007) All these collections combine images and text in various ways. The only required text for this class is “Strangely Familiar”. (Many copies are available used from Amazon) Become familiar with this text as we will be referring to it often --- both for examples of analyses and for examples of presentations.

I’d just want to be dead if I couldn’t create.
Miles Davis

Course Meetings and Schedule

Class will meet on the following days:
24 Aug - Class meets for Introduction to course
31 Aug - Class meets for choosing of topic area and to hand in proposed resource review

21 Sept - Class meets to review resource material and discuss refinement of project topic
19 Oct - Class meets to hand in annotated bibliography and review project proposals

9 Nov - Class meets to give project progress reports
30 Nov - In person office hours for review of projects

7 Dec - Class meets to put together a book

On class days when there is no meeting nor a school holiday there will be electronic office hours from 3 until 6p. I will send out information and ideas on an ongoing basis.
GRADING STRUCTURE

Students are graded on class participation, intermediate work, and final project. The total number of points for the class = 100.

Class participation: Students are expected to attend class sessions and contribute ideas to the formulation of their projects and the overall book design = 15

Intermediate work: Students are expected to produce the following in a timely matter as outlined in the class schedule:
   - Topic Area - 5
   - Proposed topic - 5
   - Annotated Bibliography -15
   - Project Proposal -10
   - Progress Report -10

Final Project = 40

Specific information about each assignment will be provided in class.

PLEASE NOTE: GRADES WILL BE GIVEN FOR HARD COPY ONLY.

See Blurb.com for information about how we can make a book: Sustainable Communities/Perceptions, Presentations