People & Place is a two-semester introduction to architecture and urban planning, co-taught by members of the architecture and planning faculty. The courses weave together the two disciplines through the use of theories and methods based in the humanities and the social sciences. In addition to attending lectures on a variety of urban-based theories, students will also work on a series of community development projects directed by practicing architects, planners, and other community professionals. The objective is to make direct field applications of theories and methods important to a variety of community based disciplines. The course is open to all students with a cumulative 3.4 GPA or better. Students are expected to register for both fall and spring semesters.

**Introduction:** The disciplines of architecture and planning are inherent to the social, built, natural, and economic environments that underlie our communities and that touch us as individuals. Yet, few people in our culture are aware of their impact; fewer still could articulate general principles that govern decisions regarding the design of our built environment, whether towns and cities, homes and structures, or public open spaces. This lack of design literacy is at the core of many of the urban dysfunctions we observe in our cities and towns. As a series of courses introducing principles of architecture and planning to undergraduate students, a crucial threshold question is ask is: What do these disciplines offer to society at large? And further: How can architecture and planning go beyond being topics of interest to pointy headed intellectuals who wear bow ties and funny glasses and be understood as relevant to society at large?

In their controversial essay, “The Death of Environmentalism” Michael Shellenberger and Ted Nordhaus argue that the failure of main-line environmental groups to effectively engage the public on issues related to climate change was due to their
inability to connect with values important to the public at large. According to the authors, the groups were too steeped in the values inherent to their disciplines and not at all connected to values important to average Americans. In this first semester of People and Place, we will begin our study of architecture and planning by looking at the role values play in our disciplines and in society and explore places where the two sets of values might connect. We will start that exploration mid-semester by engaging in community level projects with local professional partners, which will continue through the first half of the spring semester. In the second semester of the course, we will work to formally craft a design/planning method that incorporates values important to both disciplines and society.

**Topic areas/questions for this semester:**

What are values? How do you define values?

How do individuals define values? How do communities define values? What are the values inherent to the disciplines of architecture and planning? What values cut across individual, community, and discipline?

How can these values be employed to show the relevance of architecture and planning to society at large?

**Texts:**


Tony Hiss, *The Experience of Place* (Vintage, 1991)

William McDonough, *Cradle to Cradle* (North Point Press, 2002)

On-line readings through E-Reserve at the Marriott Library and WebCT

**Evaluation:**

**Sketchbook Reviews:** You will be required to use a sketchbook to complete specified sketch assignments issued throughout the semester. You will also be required to use your sketchbook to record your visual and verbal impressions during the community projects. Twice during the semester—at approximately the mid-point and at the end—you will be required to submit your sketchbook for review. You will be graded on the
degree to which you have complied with the various assignments, not on how well you
can draw. Each review will be worth 10% of your grade.

**Reflection Papers:** The reflection papers for each of the three sections listed in the
schedule below are intended as opportunities for you to integrate the various elements
contained in each section. Specifically, you will be called on to articulate how the texts,
lectures, discussions, field exercises, sketch exercises, and your community project (once
its underway) relate to each other, to community values, and to the disciplines of
architecture and planning. The final reflection paper seeks the same type of response,
but at the level of the entire semester. Each paper needs to be at least seven pages long,
double spaced. The section papers will each be worth 10%; the final paper will be worth
15%.

**Legacy Parkway Project:** We will be using the Legacy Parkway, and the processes and
controversies associated with it, as a case study during the first section of the class. For
the case study process, you will work in small groups to develop a 1-2 page research
brief and a series of overlay maps. You will get more specifics about the case study in
class. Together, the research brief and overlap maps will be worth 15%.

**Project Presentation:** About half way through the semester (just after fall break), the
class will be divided into small groups to work on community development projects of
various kinds with the assistance of a professional from the community. The projects
will begin with a several introductory sessions, then you will be expected to work with
team members and team leader to further develop the project. It is anticipated that your
project will continue through the first part of spring semester (up to spring break). At
the end of this semester, you and your team will make a formal presentation on the
progress you have made to date. The presentation will be worth 20%.

**Schedule:***

Aug. 24-31: **Introduction to Planning & Architecture**

Sept. 5-Oct. 3: **Section 1: Environmental Policy & Design and the Legacy Parkway**

Oct. 5-6: **Fall Break**

Oct. 10 & 12: **Intro to Community Projects**

Oct. 17-31: **Section 2: What is Place?**

Nov. 2-30: **Section 3: Environmental Effective Design**
Nov. 23-24:     Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 5 & 7:     Project Presentations

* This schedule is approximate and subject to change; we will post alterations on the course WebCT site.