

GEOGRAPHY 181 URBAN FIELD STUDIES

Spring 2022

Fri. 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

In the field!

or in 575 McCone Hall (9am - 1pm),

or in 145 McCone Hall (1pm-5pm),

or on Zoom during the first two class meetings

Instructor: Seth Lunine, Ph.D.

Email: slunine@berkeley.edu

Office: 561 McCone Hall

Office Hours: Monday, 3:00-4:30 via Zoom and by appointment (Zoom or in-person)

Overview

In this course you will learn how to ‘read’ urban landscapes in the San Francisco Bay Area. You will develop ways of seeing, interpreting, and analyzing building types, street forms, land-use patterns, and other artifacts of material culture, no matter how seemingly humble. We will walk through places of residence, work, leisure, and consumption; through both official and vernacular spaces; through global nodes and local redoubts; and through sites of investment and disinvestment, in- and out-migration, wealth and poverty, consensus and resistance. At every juncture, we will explore the multidirectional relationships between built form and everyday life.

What does this all mean? Two things that, in addition to landscape analysis, are the goals of the course. The first is to learn enough critical history and geography of the Bay Region to enable us to put things in context. The second is to see in the particulars of the Bay Region general principles of American urbanization, such as spaces of rebellion, real estate cycles, racialized segregation, industrial clustering, changing architectural styles, corporate power, or the evolution of retail stores. By combining these three elements—landscape, region, and urbanization—we will learn to appreciate the magnificent cacophony of places, the peculiar pleasures and fierce struggles of the Bay Region, and the banal beauty of ordinary landscapes. And in doing so, we will pursue ways to think critically about the Bay Area we inhabit, what remains to be explored, and what it may become.

We will walk for the majority of our trips and typically rely on public transportation (BART, AC Transit, SF Muni) to get to our weekly destination. Unless otherwise directed, we meet in the foyer of the **Downtown Berkeley BART Station** (below ground, near the foot of the big escalator) **at 9:00am, sharp!** Please obtain a Clipper Card so as not to waste time buying tickets.

We will stop for food, drink, and rest. Each trip includes a lunch break near inexpensive eateries. You may, of course, bring your own food. Please bring sunscreen and water! Wear comfortable walking shoes and carry an extra layer in case of unpleasant weather.

I will provide handouts for all our tours. Bring a small notebook and a pen or pencil to each class meeting to jot down notes, observations, and questions. You are welcome to use a smartphone for class purposes during walking/discussion periods.

Light rain or showers will not cancel class, but you will want a rain jacket and an umbrella. If the forecast is over ~50% for rain (not merely light rain or showers), I will send an email by 8:00pm on Thursday night to tell you whether we will meet at BART or in 575 McCone. On rain days we will focus on research methods for course projects.

There are no prerequisites for enrollment this course. All students are welcome!

Learning Outcomes

Through successful participation in the course, students will:

- develop skills for interpreting and analyzing the built environment and comparing various cities and geographic areas;
- better understand the historical geography of the San Francisco Bay Area;
- develop familiarity with historical and contemporary data sources for urban analysis;
- create and present their own analysis of specific urban spaces, informed by research methods learned in class.

Required Text

There is no textbook for this course. All readings will be available in the “Files” section of our bCourses site. I will also add supplemental readings for each trip, which are recommended but not required. Be sure to check our bCourse site regularly.

Course Grading

Successful completion of all three course components is required to receive a passing grade.

Attendance & Participation.....	50%
Response Papers.....	25%
Course Project.....	25%

Course grades will be comprised by the total points earned on all four components listed above based on this standard grading scale:

A 93-100%	B+ 87-89%	C+ 77-79%	D+ 67-69%	P > 70%
A- 90-92%	B 83-86%	C 73-76%	D 63-66%	NP < 70%
	B- 80-82%	C- 70-72%	D- 60-62%	
			F <60%	

Course Requirements

Attendance & Participation (50% of course grade)

This is a field course predicated on student participation; attendance is indispensable for doing well. More than one unexcused absence will negatively affect your grade, so *please keep me apprised of any issues or challenges that may effect your performance in our course.*

Participation consists of active engagement with the landscape and with each other during our weekly trips. You are expected to complete all assigned readings before each class and to arrive prepared to ask and answer questions, point out examples, and otherwise participate actively.

Our weekly handouts for each trip will include questions pertaining to: (1) assigned readings; (2) interpretation and analysis of individual sites; and (3) broader patterns of landscape formation and urban transformation. These questions will structure many of our discussions, along with your own questions and insights.

During class, we will learn from each other and create a safe environment to ask questions and experiment with ideas as we explore the Bay Area. All students are expected to engage in a thoughtful and respectful manner with one another. In addition to consistency, strong participation should:

- reflect critical thinking;
- include relevant, insightful examples that directly address the discussion topic;
- introduce new but relevant topics to the discussion;
- integrate outside materials or experiential knowledge in ways that enhance our understanding of the discussion topic;
- demonstrate active listening and strong connections to others by responding to, or building on, a point someone else has made;
- create space for as many classmates as possible to participate.

Nonverbal Participation. Although I encourage everyone to participate verbally during class, I understand that students may not always feel comfortable doing so. You are welcome to submit brief written responses to one or two questions on our handouts as a supplement to

verbal participation. Written responses to these questions are due by 5:00pm on the Wednesday following each trip. Your response to each question should be roughly 250 words; your text should be double-spaced with a 12-point font and free of grammatical errors and typos. I will provide further information about nonverbal participation during our first class meeting.

Feel free to check-in with me about your participation grade at any point during the semester.

Response Papers (25% of course grade)

Drawing on field notes, assigned readings, and your own insights, please write a two-page (~600 words), double-spaced essay in response to **five trips**. The choice of trips is up to you—write about the ones you find most interesting.

Rather than a summary, you should focus on one or two specific aspects of our trip and interpret these in depth. To this end, you must reference **at least three** specific pieces of information from the trip (trip notes, sites, specific buildings, discussions, social interactions, etc.). You must also reference **at least one** specific piece of information from the reading(s) assigned for that day. Beyond these basic requirements, the assignments are fairly wide open. Because these are thought pieces, I will not be strict on citations, but please make sure I know where to find the information you reference (i.e., include the author of the reading and the page number).

Your responses are due by **5:00pm on the Wednesday following each trip**. Please upload your essays on our bCourse site. Your work should be proofread and free of grammatical errors and typos. Include your last name in the title of the digital documents you submit, as well as your full name and an abbreviated title of the trip on your document. Late work will be penalized one letter grade.

Your first three reading responses are “low-stakes” assignments and you will receive 100% credit for completing the responses as described above. Deductions will be made for late or incomplete papers, or responses that do not demonstrate rigorous engagement. The final two responses will be graded with slightly more rigor and with particular attention to the feedback I provide on your first two responses.

Course Project: Bay Region Site Analysis (25% of course grade)

Each student, or pair of students, will select, research, and analyze a site in the Bay Region. A “site” can be a building, street, park, subdivision, generic landscape element, piece of infrastructure, social setting, and more. You will use both the concepts and the research methods we learn in class to contextualize and interpret your site, discussing its history, significance, and how it fits into themes of landscape studies and into broader patterns of Bay Region history and/or American urbanism. Depending on our scheduling, we may have

project presentations at an informal “Bay Region Landscapes Symposium” at the end of the semester. *We will discuss the project at length during class.*

Course Policies

Communication is key, now more than ever. Keep me apprised of any issues or challenges that may affect your performance in our course, including attendance.

Email: Please use your berkeley.edu account to email me, rather than bCourse. The subject line for all email messages to me should include “Geog 181”.

Readings: *Readings are essential to this course.* Complete each reading before the lecture for which it is assigned. I will distribute a handout with key terms and several questions for the more challenging reading assignments.

Work Submission:

Please submit all participation assignments, reading responses, and course project components in the assignments section of our bCourse site. Include your last name in the title of each digital document and include your full name on all of your documents.

Late submissions of course assignments are possible with prior permission and may require documentation. Talk to me as soon as possible if you anticipate the need for an extension on any assignment. Without prior permission, late submission of any class assignment will result in the loss of two-thirds grade (e.g., from an A to a B+) for every 48 hours overdue.

Academic Integrity: Any paper, report, or homework submitted under your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course. All words and ideas written by other people must be properly attributed: fully identified as to source and the extent of your use of their work. Cheating, plagiarism, and other academic misconduct will result in a failing grade on the assignment, paper, quiz, or exam in question and will be reported to Student Judicial Affairs.

Disabled Students’ Services: The fundamental principles of nondiscrimination and accommodation in academic programs establish that students may not, on the basis of their disabilities, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any University program or activity. If you require academic accommodations for this course, please obtain a Letter of Accommodation from the Disabled Students’ Program (see: <https://dsp.berkeley.edu/students/accommodations-and-services>). Once I receive your Letter of Accommodation, please make an appointment with me to clarify and confirm your accommodations.

Reasonable Accommodation for Students' Religious Beliefs, Observations and Practices: In compliance with Education Code, Section 92640(a), it is the official policy of the University of California at Berkeley to permit any student to undergo a test or examination, without penalty, at a time when that activity would not violate the student's religious creed, unless administering the examination at an alternative time would impose an undue hardship which could not reasonably have been avoided.

Course Website: Please check our bCourse site frequently for updates, announcements, and additional resources, along with supplementary materials and items of interest.

Student Resources

[Tang Center / Counseling & Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#) offers immediate and long-term counseling services to assist students with a variety of concerns about academic success, mental health, life management, and personal development.

[Tang Center / "Do You!"](#) provides information and support for students dealing with alcohol and substance issues and for students in recovery.

[Basic Needs Center](#) provides financial, food, housing and other basic needs support and services.

[The PATH to Care Center](#) provides affirming, empowering, and confidential support for survivors and those who have experienced gendered violence, including: sexual harassment, dating and intimate partner violence, sexual assault, stalking, and sexual exploitation. Confidential advocates bring a non-judgmental, caring approach to exploring all options, rights, and resources.

[Disabled Students' Program](#) provides a wide range of resources to ensure equal access to educational opportunities, including assessment, advising, note-taking services, and academic accommodations.

[Student Learning Center](#) offers writing support, peer tutoring, and other academic resources.

[Office for the Prevention of Harassment & Discrimination \(OPHD\)](#) ensures that UC Berkeley provides an environment free from discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence. OPHD takes reports alleging discrimination and harassment on the basis of categories including race, color, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation/identity, including allegations of sexual harassment and sexual violence.

[Center for Student Conduct](#) provides full texts of campus-wide policies and regulations regarding student rights.

Course Schedule

Our schedule is subject to change due to health considerations & weather conditions

January 21 Introductions & Overviews

Synchronous Zoom meeting

January 28 Inherent Heterodoxy in Landscape Studies

Synchronous Zoom meeting

Required Reading:

Paul Groth, "Key Processes of Cultural Landscape Formation and Change," from *Geography 169B: American Cultural Landscapes, 1900-present*.

Assignment #1 for class on 1/28:

- Find a photograph of a landscape or element of the built environment that illustrates one of Groth's 'landscape processes' and write a one-paragraph explanation (~300 words).
- Be sure to cite the source of your photo, as well as the photographer, if possible.
- Upload your assignment (photo & paragraph) via our bCourse site in .pdf, .doc, or .pages format by the beginning of class on 1/28.
- This is an experimental, exploratory, and "low-stakes" assignment; you will receive a 100% credit for completing the assignment as described above. I will make deductions for late or incomplete work.

Read one of the following three texts:

Paul Groth, "Frameworks for Cultural Landscape Studies," in *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes*, eds. Paul Groth and Todd Bressi (1997), 1-21.

Dolores Hayden, "Urban Landscape History: The Sense of Place and the Politics of Space," in *Understanding Ordinary Landscapes*, eds. Paul Groth and Todd W. Bressi (1997), 111-133.

Don Mitchell, "New Axioms for Reading the Landscape: Paying Attention to Political Economy and Social Justice," in *Political Economies of Landscape Change: Places of Integrative Power*, eds. James Wescoat, Jr. and Douglas Johnson (2008), 29-47.

Assignment #2 for class on 1/28:

- Based on one or more of the above readings, define “(cultural) landscape studies” in a sentence or two.
- No need to upload your work on bCourse, just bring it to class on 1/28.
- This assignment will not be graded.

February 4 City of Acedeme: UCB Campus & Environs

Meet at 575 McCone Hall

Richard Walker, “Four Ecologies of Residence in the San Francisco Bay Area,” *Ecumene* (1995), 33-64 (“The ecotopian middle landscape” section is integral to our look at north Berkeley homes).

Don Mitchell, “The End of Public Space? People's Park, Definitions of the Public, and Democracy,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 85 (1995): 108-33.

February 11 Berkeley Up & Down

Meet at Downtown Berkeley BART

Grady Clay, “Crossing the American Grain with Vesalius, Geddes, and Jackson: The Cross-Section as a Learning Tool,” in *Everyday America*, eds. Chris Wilson and Paul Groth (2003), 109–129.

Charles Wollenberg, *Berkeley: A City in History* (2008), selections.

February 18 Commanding Heights: Downtown San Francisco & SOMA

Meet at Downtown Berkeley BART

Chester Hartman and Sarah Carnochan, *City for Sale* (2002), selections.

Peter Booth Wiley, *The National Trust Guide to San Francisco* (2000), 73-121.

February 25 Sin City & Industrial Suburb: Emeryville

Meet at Downtown Berkeley BART

Richard Walker, “Industry Builds Out the City: The Suburbanization of Manufacturing in the San Francisco Bay Area,” in *Manufacturing Suburbs: Building Work and Home*, ed. Robert Lewis (2004), 92-123.

March 4 San Francisco “Old” & “Renewed”: Civic Center to North Beach

Meet at Downtown Berkeley BART

Katja Schwaller, “Becoming Twitterlandia,” in in *Counterpoints: A San Francisco Bay Area Atlas of Displacement & Resistance*, ed. The Anti-Eviction Mapping Project (Oakland: PM Press, 2021), 84-86.

Rebecca Solnit, “The City’s Tangled Heart,” in *Infinite City: A San Francisco Atlas* (2010), 37-44.

Winston Kyan, “Electric Pagodas and Hyphenate Gates: Folklore, Folklife, and the Architecture of Chinatown,” *Amerasian Journal* (2013), 25-47.

March 11 Commodification & Community in the Castro & the Mission

Meet at Downtown Berkeley BART

Manuel Castells, *The City and the Grassroots* (1983), 99-109, 130-145.

Lori Flores, “Seeing Through Murals: The Future of Latino San Francisco,” *Boom* (2016), 16-27.

March 18 “Library Day” (or makeup of a rained out trip)

Meet at 575 McCone

***** Course project proposal due by the end of class *****

March 25 Spring Break

April 1 Centers and Edges in “Oakland Rising”

Meet at Downtown Berkeley BART

Robert Fogelson, *Downtown: Its Rise and Fall* (2001), selections.

Mitchell Schwarzer, *Hella Town: Oakland’s History of Development and Disruption* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2021), selections.

April 8 The Waterfront & West Oakland

Brandi Summers, “Untimely Futures,” *Places Journal*, November 2021.

April 15 **“Library Day” (or makeup of a rained out trip)**

Meet at 575 McCone

April 22 **Office Space: Dublin & Pleasanton**

Meet at Downtown Berkeley BART

Louise Mazingo, “Campus, Estate, and Park: Lawn Culture Comes to the Corporation,” in *Everyday America*, eds. Chris Wilson and Paul Groth (2003), 255-274.

David Beers, “Tomorrowland: We Have Seen the Future and it is Pleasanton,” San Francisco *Examiner*, 18 Jan. 1987.

April 29 **Project Presentations & Submissions**