Overview

How are people affected by overcrowding, traffic congestion, and noise? Why do people litter or vandalize their environments? How do buildings affect their occupants? Does the architectural design of apartment buildings influence patterns of neighboring and friendship formation? Why do people consume scarce environmental resources? Can residential, work, and neighborhood settings be designed to reduce stress, increase productivity, and promote physical activity? These are some of the questions that have concerned environmental psychologists.

Environmental psychology is the study of human behavior and well-being in relation to the large-scale, sociophysical environment. The term, large-scale environment, refers to places such as homes, offices, neighborhoods, and whole communities. These places can be described in terms of several physical and social dimensions, including their geographical location, architectural design, membership and social organization. The term, sociophysical environment, reflects the assumption that the physical and social dimensions of places are closely intertwined. The architectural design of a housing complex, for example, can exert a subtle but substantial impact on the friendship patterns that develop among residents. This course emphasizes the interdependence between physical and social aspects of places, rather than viewing these dimensions as separate and isolated.

Organization

In the initial portion of the course, we consider certain organizing principles that environmental psychology shares with other areas of Social Ecology. We then focus on the basic psychological processes by which people interact with their surroundings: interpretation, evaluation, action, and response. After considering existing theory and research relating to these processes, we examine some of the practical applications of this research in areas such as architecture, health promotion, facilities management, education, and urban design.

Course Requirements

The required texts for this course are:

1. Hall, The Hidden Dimension (HD)
2. Lynch, The Image of the City (TIC)
2. Whyte, The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces (TSL)

These texts have been placed on reserve at the library. You are also responsible for reading the required supplemental articles listed in the attached course calendar. These additional required readings are included in the course reader for this class. The reader is available for purchase from University Readers online at http://www.universityreaders.com. Class attendance and participation are essential as the lectures will provide information on various topics not covered in the texts.
Exams and Course Assignments

There will be two exams in this course:

Midterm Exam on Thursday, February 14, covering the material discussed between Tuesday, January 8 and Tuesday, February 12; and

Final Exam on Thursday, March 20, covering the material discussed between Tuesday, February 19 and Thursday, March 13.

The exams will be “mixed format” and will include multiple choice and short answer questions. Each exam will constitute 40% of your course grade.

In addition to the exams, four take-home assignments involving applications and observations of environment-behavior principles are accessible from the course web site; each will be explained in class and should be handed in at the beginning of the following class meeting. These assignments are short exercises designed to increase your awareness of the topics covered in class. The four take-home assignments will count for 10% of your course grade. Be sure to check the course web site for the due dates of these assignments.

You are expected to carefully review all assigned readings listed in the attached course calendar prior to discussion of those readings in class; and to attend and participate actively in class discussions each week. Attendance and class participation are very important in this class. You will be encouraged to join in class discussions and participate in in-class activities and demonstrations. Your active participation in class sessions will count for 10% of your grade in the course.

Grading

Your scores on the two exams, take home assignments, and course participation will be added and a grading curve will be derived from the distribution of total scores. Your grade will be determined as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take-Home Assignments</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extra Credit

Throughout the quarter, you will have opportunities to earn extra credit points. These extra points are added to your total score for the exams, take home assignments, and class participation (after the curve has been established). Earning extra credit points may enable you to earn a higher grade than you would have received had the extra assignments not been completed. If you would like to propose one or more extra credit projects, please e-mail a brief description (no more than a short paragraph) of your project ideas to Erit Maor, course assistant, who will direct them to the teaching assistants (Miryha Gould and Shalini Misra) and the instructor for approval.

Some suggested extra credit assignments include the following (see the course web site for examples of extra credit projects submitted during earlier quarters): (1) Take photographic slides of an object or place that illustrate a principle covered in class and write a brief (approximately one-page) description of how the object or setting shown in the slides illustrate that principle. (2) Prepare a poster board that displays photographs depicting one or more principles covered in class, and include brief annotations explaining how each photo illustrates a specific course concept. (3) Develop a video (e.g., on YouTube or your own web site) or a BLOG that explains and illustrates a particular course concept. (4) Identify a piece of music, a painting or cartoon, a printed or televised advertisement, and explain how that item (e.g., the lyrics of a song or the messages conveyed by an ad) illustrates a particular course concept. Your written analysis of the course concept should be approximately one page in length and should be submitted along with a copy of the music or video CD, and/or printed copy of the cartoon or advertisement that illustrates the course concept. You can earn up to 10 extra credit points for the quarter. Point allocations will depend on the quality and depth of descriptions and illustrations provided for one or more course concepts.
ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Schedule of Discussion Topics and Reading Assignments

Note: Powerpoint slides for each class session can be downloaded from:

https://webfiles.uci.edu/dstokols/EnvPsy

Section I. Introduction and Overview

Tuesday
January 8

Assignment:

Overview of the Course


http://ucsdnews.ucsd.edu/newsrel/soc/07-07ObesityIK.asp

http://content.nejm.org/content/vol357/issue4/images/data/370/DC2/NEJM_Christakis_370v1.swf


Thursday
January 10

Assignment:

Origins, Orientation, and Scope of Environmental Psychology


The Internet sites listed below provide additional information about the field of environmental psychology:

Division of Population and Environmental Psychology, American Psychological Association
http://www.apa34.org

Environmental Design Research Association (EDRA)
http://www.edra.org

Environmental Psychology Division of the International Association for Applied Psychology
Section II. Organizing Principles

Tuesday
January 15

**Systems Theory, Ecology, and Multiple Levels of Analysis**

**Assignment:**


Thursday
January 17

**Systems Theory (cont.)**

**Assignment:**


Section III. Processes of Person-Environment Transaction

Tuesday
January 22

**Interpreting the Environment: Environmental Cognition**

**Assignment:**


**First Take-Home Assignment** on Cognitive Maps; Due Thursday January 24

Thursday
January 24

**Interpreting the Environment: Personality and Sociocultural Factors**

**Assignment:**


***Take-Home Assignment 1 Due

Tuesday
January 29

Evaluation of the Environment: Environmental Attitudes and Assessment

Assignment:


Second Take-Home Assignment on Physical Traces; Due Thursday Jan. 31

Thursday
January 31

Taking Action in the Environment: Territoriality and Personal Space

Assignment:


Hall, HD. Chapters 1-2, 8-10 (pp. 1-22, 99-129).


***Take-Home Assignment 2 Due

Tuesday
February 5

Taking Action in the Environment: Determinants of Pro-Environmental Behavior

Assignment:


**Film:**
"An Inconvenient Truth" by Al Gore

**Third Take-Home Assignment** on Density and Crowding; due Thursday Feb. 7

**Thursday**
**February 7**

**Responding to the Environment: Behavioral, Social, and Health Effects of Environmental Stressors**

**Assignment:**


***Take-Home Assignment 3 Due***

**Tuesday**
**February 12**

**Responding to the Environment: The Physical Environment and Social Interaction**

**Assignment:**


**Film:**
"Livable Streets" by Donald Appleyard

**Thursday**
**February 14**

***Midterm Exam (2:00-3:20 PM)***
(coversing material discussed through Feb. 12)

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**Section IV. Applications of Behavioral Research to Community Planning and Environmental Design**

**Tuesday**
**February 19**

**Creating Livable Cities**

**Assignment:**
Hall, HD. 174-180.


See also the following web site on the new urbanism and smart growth:
http://www.cnu.org/
http://www.smartgrowth.org/

**Thursday**
**February 21**

**Designing Effective Public Spaces**

**Assignment:**


Whyte, *TSL*, Chapters 1-5 & 11 (pp. 16-59, 94-101)

**Film:**
"*The Social Life of Small Urban Spaces*" by William Whyte

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**Monday**
**February 26**

**Design Guidelines for Homes, Offices, Classrooms, and Hospitals**

**Assignment:**


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**Thursday**
**February 28**

**Environmental Psychology and Neighborhood Design**

**Assignment:**


### Tuesday, March 4

**Natural Environments and Restorative Settings**

**Assignment:**


**Fourth Take-Home Assignment on Favorite Places; Due on Thursday March 6**

### Thursday, March 6

**Virtual Environments: Environmental Psychology of the Internet**

**Assignment:**


***Take-Home Assignment 4 Due***

See also the following web sites for additional information on psychology and cyberspace:


### Tuesday, March 11

**Social-Structural Approaches to Environmental Change**

**Assignment:**


Thursday
March 13

Evaluating Environmental Interventions

Assignment:


Thursday
March 20

***Final Exam (1:30 – 3:30 PM)***

(covering material discussed between February 19 - March 13)