

48-750 HISTORIES OF URBAN DESIGN

Cities are manmade artifacts, created for a purpose. In this course we examine various histories of the design and redesign of cities and the reasons for those interventions. The scale of urban interventions varies greatly, from the macro-scale of designing totally new cities to the micro-scale of altering individual nodes within a city. We explore the relationship between form and culture by considering the political, cultural, social, economic, and aesthetic forces that have shaped the public realm of urban and suburban spaces (streets, squares, institutions, housing). We focus on recognizing and understanding the rationale behind the design and use of culturally important urban spaces during their own time, with periodic forays into the issues that influence those spaces today.