

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN SCHOOL OF INFORMATION
Information Architecture – SI658
Syllabus

Instructor: Dan Klyn <owilde@umich.edu>
Class Sessions: Mondays 1:10PM – 4:00PM 2245 North Quad
Website: <https://umich.instructure.com/courses/120864>
Course Coordination: <https://twitter.com/si658>

Course Description

The theme of SI 658 Information Architecture this term is **the public environment**.

The primary mode for our work in the class will be investigative: we'll conduct research and generate new knowledge to better understand the role that public space plays in environments that support the wellbeing of human beings.

Websites and information systems are just as much a part of the man-made, human-inhabited environment as buildings. Indeed, most Americans spend 40 or more hours a month "in there" -- in these places made of information.

To what extent does what architects and planners know about the making the public environment map onto digital space?

We have thirteen weeks to find out.

Pre-Requisites

None

Learning Objectives

The purpose of this course is to engage students in original, primary research that expands knowledge in (and thereby hastens evolution in the epistemology of) the field of information architecture. The Learning Objectives for this course are for all participants to better understand:

- Where or what *is* the public environment in digital space?
- Is the concept of a "public," and differentiation between merely buildings and capital-a Architecture primarily a Western, post-Enlightenment trope?
- Where are the boundaries of public space?
- When do you know you're in such spaces and places?
- What's the consequence of shrinking access or no access to public space in the man-made environment?

Course Text

Time Over Two for The City Over Two (Speech Transcript). Richard Saul Wurman, International Design Conference in Aspen, 1970.

The focal point for our work this term is a speech that Richard Saul Wurman – founder of the field of information architecture – gave at the International Design Conference in Aspen in 1970 at the age of 35. The text of this speech had been filed away in a box in the IDCA archives until just a few weeks ago. Together (and with some help from Mr. Wurman), we'll see what these ideas can do for and to us in 2017.

Photo facsimile and instructor's transcription of the text of this speech are available to enrolled students in the "files" section of the course website.

Lecture Materials and Student Data / Reports

Lecture slides and student presentations / data will be published each week on the course website.

Course Outline

1/9	1	Class Curriculum and Procedures	Introductions , Q&A	Walkthrough of the plan for class this term
1/2 3	2	What's So Special About Architecture?	Lecture	Dan talks a lot. With slides.
130	3	Where Did Information Architecture Come From?	Lecture	Dan talks a lot. With slides.
2/6	4	What Good Means	Lecture	Dan talks a lot. With slides.
2/1 3	5	Places and Spaces We Don't Understand I	Reporting & Discussion	Approximately 15 students each give 5 minute presentations in the first two hours of each of these three class sessions. Then after a break, we all talk about the data that's been presented, and ways of turning it into information and knowledge.
2/2 0	6	Places and Spaces We Don't Understand II		
3/6	7	Places and Spaces We Don't Understand III		
3/1 3	8	Places and Spaces We Know Well I - III	Reporting & Discussion	Ditto
3/2 0	9			
3/2 7	10			
4/3	11	Digital & Blended Spaces We Depend Upon I - III	Reporting & Discussion	Ditto
4/1 0	12			
4/1 7	13			

Note: Schedule, topics, and assignments may be changed/adjusted as the semester progresses.

Grading

Work in the course will be weighted as follows to determine a final percentage grade:

1 st Presentation	33%
2 nd Presentation	33%
3 rd Presentation	33%
World IA Day Attendance	1%

Possible grades are A (99% and over), C (66%) and F.