

## **GGR433 H1S Built Environment and Health**

**Winter 2014 Course Syllabus** (rev. Jan 3/14)

### **Administrative Details**

**Course Name:** GGR433 H1S Built Environment and Health

**Time:** Thursday 12-3

**Location:** SS 2128 (Sidney Smith Building)

**Instructor:** Pamela Kaufman, Assistant Professor, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto

**Office Hours:** After class or by appointment

**Email:** [p.kaufman@utoronto.ca](mailto:p.kaufman@utoronto.ca)

**Telephone:** 416-978-8137

**Office:** Health Sciences Building, 155 College St., Rm. 536 (entre via suite 530)

**Teaching Assistant:** Mariana Ferraz Duarte ([m.ferrazduarte@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:m.ferrazduarte@mail.utoronto.ca)), office hours by appointment

### **Course Description**

**Exclusions:** none

**Prerequisites:** Completed 10 FCEs

**Overview:** Linking across fields that include public health, geography and planning, this course allows students to explore the growing evidence and ways in which human health at the individual and population level is affected by the spatial distribution and design of the built environment in which we live, work and play. More specifically, the course will explore how various planning and development decisions impact population and individual health, particularly in relation to chronic diseases and injuries. (A more detailed course description and week-by-week breakdown is provided on page 6-8)

**Learning Outcomes:** By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify examples of interactions between the built environment and the health of individuals and populations, at the local, regional, provincial and national levels
2. Compare how the fields of planning and public health developed and diversified over time

3. Identify the benefits and challenges of cross-disciplinary collaboration to identify problems, and develop, implement and evaluate solutions to built environment influences on health
4. Identify tools and best practices within planning that promote healthier communities
5. Critically examine issues in the built environment that have an impact on health at the local and global level, e.g., walkability of neighbourhood settings and overall physical activity
6. Integrate current evidence regarding the impacts of the built environment on health with information and perspectives from other courses and/or personal experiences
7. Apply lessons from planning and public health research to current and future problems related to the built environment and health

**Structure:** This course emphasizes participation, critical thinking and communication. Class sessions are structured to include some topics being introduced through lectures by the instructor or guest speaker, but will **primarily be seminar style**, where students are expected to complete the readings before class and actively participate in discussion during the session. Details on the assignments and due dates are provided below (page 3).

**About Your Instructor:** I am an Assistant Professor in the Dalla Lana School of Public Health at the University of Toronto, and a Senior Project lead with the Ontario Tobacco Research Unit (OTRU) and the Social and Epidemiological Research Department at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. My academic training is in anthropology, landscape architecture and environmental design. For the past 10 years, I have engaged in a program of research addressing physical and social environment factors that affect the development and implementation of public health policies, and the beneficial effects and unintended consequences of such policies. I have a particular interest in the synergistic relationships between the built environment and health, and am excited about exploring with students how planning and development decisions impact population and individual health.

Student learning will also be facilitated by other faculty members, professionals and practitioners, who will bring first-hand experience working, studying and influencing decisions made regarding the built environment that have a positive influence on health.

**Expectations:** You can expect that I will show up at each class prepared to facilitate your learning. As students, you are expected to show up at each class familiar with the readings and background material, and prepared to actively engage in lively discussion. This course expects students to engage in critical thinking and thoughtful reflection about how knowledge can be applied to solve real-world problems. Students are encouraged to integrate evidence on the impacts of the built environment on health with their own academic and personal experiences, such as reflections about the neighbourhoods that you grew up in or are currently living within.

**Required Texts and Readings:** A variety of learning formats will be used to facilitate your learning, including guest lectures, videos and scholarly readings. A list of 3 required readings for each class is provided in the week-by-week activity breakdown on pages 6-10. The full citations and links will be

provided in a separate document. Readings include journal articles and chapters from the following text: Andrew L. Dannenberg, Howard Frumkin, Richard J. Jackson (eds). 2011. Making Healthy Places: Designing and building for health, well-being, and sustainability. Island Press. Washington, D.C..

An electronic version of the text is available by direct link through your UofT student registration: <http://go.utlib.ca/cat/9543440> ; or purchased through Amazon <http://www.amazon.com/Making-Healthy-Places-Well-being-Sustainability/dp/1597267279>).

Journal articles are available as direct links through your UofT student registration or through Blackboard.

### **Course Requirements and Grading**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Max. Length</b>	<b>Total Weight</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
A1. Preparation and Contribution (Participation and contributing to discussion)		20%	January 8 to April 2
A2. Weekly Log	10 pages (1 pg per weekly entry)	20%	a) Entries for weeks 2-6 due February 26 b) Entries for weeks 7-11 due April 2
A3. Neighbourhood Case Study a) Proposal (10%) b) Final report (20%) c) Presentation (10%)	a) 2 pages b) 10 pages c) 15 min	40%	a) January 29 b) March 19 c) March 26/April 2
A4. Briefing Note	3 pages	20%	February 12

Assignments are more fully described on pages 10-13 of this outline  
Drop date: March 8, 2015

### **Course/Departmental/Divisional Policies**

**Submission Methods:** All assignments are to be submitted electronically through Turnitin unless otherwise noted by the instructor.

***Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.***

**Deadlines for Assignment Submissions:** All assignments are to be submitted on the designated due date (see submission methods below). Assignments submitted late will be penalized **2% per day reduction in mark** (including weekend days). **No assignments will be accepted more than one week after the due date unless the student has obtained prior permission from the instructor in the case of documented illness or other extenuating circumstances.**

**Missed Deadlines:** For illness or other non-medical emergencies that affect your ability to complete coursework, you must provide the instructor with appropriate documentation. For missed work, contact the instructor as soon as possible – and no later than one-week after the original due date. For medical exemptions, only an official U of T medical certificate will be accepted (available online at <http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>). For non-medical documentation please see: <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/petitions/process#documentation>. Please consult your college registrar if you are having serious difficulties during the term that prevent you from completing your course work. They may be able to provide a letter documenting your situation. Be aware that submitting a note which has been altered or obtained under false pretenses is considered a very serious offence by the University.

**Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism is an academic offense at the University of Toronto. Plagiarism is quoting (or paraphrasing) the work of an author (including the work of fellow students) without a proper citation (and quotation marks when using an author's words). Students also should not be submitting any academic work for which credit has previously been obtained or is being sought, without first discussing with the instructor. Please consult the "Rules and Regulations" section of the Arts and Science Calendar ([http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/Rules\\_&\\_Regulations.html](http://www.artsandscience.utoronto.ca/ofr/calendar/Rules_&_Regulations.html)) for further information and check 'How not to plagiarize' website at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

**Accessibility Needs:** The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: [disability.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:disability.services@utoronto.ca) or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>

**Accommodations for Religious Observances:** The University welcomes and includes students, staff and faculty from a wide range of backgrounds, cultural traditions and spiritual beliefs. It is the policy of the University to arrange reasonable accommodation of the needs of students who observe religious holy days other than those already accommodated by ordinary scheduling and statutory holidays. Please note that it is the student's responsibility to alert teaching staff in a timely fashion to upcoming religious observances and anticipated absences. For more information on the applicable policies: <http://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/guidelines/religiousobservances.htm>

**Copyright in Instructional Settings:** If a student wishes to tape-record, photograph, video-record or otherwise reproduce lecture presentations, course notes or other similar materials provided by instructors, he or she must obtain the instructor's consent beforehand.

**On the Library:** University of Toronto Libraries provide access to a vast collection of online and print resources to faculty, staff, and students. Research help is available by phone, e-mail, chat, and in-person. For more detail see <http://oneseach.library.utoronto.ca/>

**Note:** The contents of this summary may change

## **GGR401H1 Built Environment and Health**

### **Detailed Course Description**

From zoning laws developed more than a century ago to prevent the spread of diseases, the built environment has been invariably linked to the health of individuals as well as entire populations. Over time, these concepts diverged into the distinct disciplines of public health and planning. In recent years, there has been renewed interest in the association between the built environment and many non-infectious diseases, including obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, cancer and injuries. However, few planning and public health professionals are equipped with the knowledge and skills to communicate and work collaboratively to create healthy communities. Linking across fields that include public health, geography and planning, this course allows students to explore the growing evidence and ways in which human health is affected by the spatial distribution and design of the built environment in which we live, work and play. More specifically, the course will explore how various planning and development decisions impact population and individual health, particularly in relation to chronic diseases and injuries.

Based on a model curriculum developed by instructors of planning and public health,<sup>1</sup> the curriculum is organized within the following three units:

1. **Planning and Public Health Foundations:** To provide students with an overview of the fields of planning and public health, from their origins to present. Students will gain foundational knowledge about the core values and histories of planning and public health, how they evolved to the present day, and theories on the relationship between the built environment and public health.
2. **Health Issues Related to the Built Environment:** To provide students with knowledge about how the built environment influences health related behaviours such as physical activity, access to healthy food, water and clean air, and the implications for major health issues such as injury, obesity, diabetes and mental health. Students will also consider the socioeconomic and cultural dimensions of vulnerable populations, and concerns about health equity.
3. **Designing the Built Environment for Health:** To provide students with knowledge about how planning and public health tools developed and used by architects, urban planners, public health professionals, sociologists and anthropologists can be used to address the health impacts of the built environment. Students will be able to identify contemporary features of the built environment and how they contribute and detract from individual and population health.

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<sup>1</sup> Botchwey N, Hobson S, Dannenberg A, Mumford K, Contant C, McMillan T, Jackson R, Lopez R, Winkle C. A Model Curriculum for a Course on Built Environment and Public Health: Training for an Interdisciplinary Workforce. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 2009; 36 (2S): S63-S71.

Students will learn about the role of policies and practices on the health of individuals and populations from the local to global level and gain greater awareness of how the built environment impacts the choices that people make in their day-to-day lives, and the importance of ethical considerations in decision-making. Students will also consider future challenges for healthy built environments such as environmental sustainability.

Throughout the course, students will engage in critical thinking, application of knowledge to solve real-world problems, and thoughtful reflection. Students are encouraged to integrate evidence on the impacts of the built environment on health with their own academic and personal experiences. In doing so, students will contemplate their future role as citizens, academics and professionals in improving outcomes for a healthier world.

A week-by-week breakdown of in-class activities is provided below.

<b>Session/ Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
<b>1. 1. Planning and Public Health Foundations</b>		
1. Jan 8	An Introduction to the Built Environment and Health Course	1. Course Syllabus
2. Jan 15	Reconnecting Urban Planning and Public Health	1. Sloane (2006) From congestion to urban sprawl: planning and health in historical context 2. Corburn (2004) Confronting the challenges in reconnecting urban planning and public health 3. Dannenberg et al. (2011) Chapter 1. An Introduction to Healthy Places
<b>2. 2. Health Issues Related to the Built Environment</b>		
3. Jan 22	Diabetes, Obesity and the Built Environment: Food Access and Security	1. Lovasi et al. (2009) Built environment and obesity in disadvantaged populations 2. Dannenberg et al. (2011) Chapter 3. Food Environments 3. Toronto Public Health. (2010) Cultivating Food Connections (Toronto Food Strategy Report) (pg. 1-25)
4. Jan 29	Diabetes, Obesity and the Built Environment: Physical Activity	1. Dannenberg et al. (2011) Chapter 2. Community Design for Physical Activity 2. Brennan Ramirez et al. (2006) Indicators of activity-friendly communities: An evidence-based consensus process 3. Glazier et al. (2014) Density, Destinations or Both? A Comparison of Measures of Walkability in Relation to Transportation Behaviors, Obesity and Diabetes in Toronto, Canada.

5. Feb 5	Vulnerable Populations and the Built Environment: Aging and Mental Health	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dannenberg et al. (2011) Chapter 9. Vulnerable Populations and the Built Environment.</li> <li>2. Lum et al. (2004) The aging experience of Chinese and Caribbean seniors.</li> <li>3. Evans (2003) The built environment and mental health.</li> </ol>
6. Feb 12	Vulnerable Populations and the Built Environment: Social Capital and Community Engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dannenberg et al. (2011) Chapter 8. Social Capital and Community Design.</li> <li>2. Leyden (2003) Social Capital and the Built Environment: The Importance of Walkable Neighborhoods.</li> <li>3. Dannenberg et al. (2011) Chapter 19. Community Engagement in Design and Planning.</li> </ol>
3. Feb 16-20: Reading Week- no classes!		
4. 3. Designing the Built Environment for Health		
7. Feb 26	Creating Healthy Communities: Policy and Legislation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dannenberg et al. (2011) Chapter 18. Policy and Legislation for Healthy Places</li> <li>2. Geller (2003) Smart growth: a prescription for livable cities.</li> <li>3. Dunn et al. (2009) Final Report -Peel Healthy Development Index (pg 1-4; 49-99).</li> </ol>
8. Mar 5	Creating Healthy Communities: Planning and Design Approaches	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dannenberg et al. (2011) Chapter 20. Measuring, Assessing and Certifying Healthy Places.</li> <li>2. Krieger et al. (2003) Assessing health impact assessment: multi-disciplinary and international perspectives.</li> <li>3. Lees et al. (2009) Bringing Health to the Planning Table: A Profile of Promising Practices in Canada and Abroad (pg 1-30)</li> </ol>
9. Mar 12	Behavioural Choices and the Built Environment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dannenberg et al. (2011) Chapter 17. Behavioral Choices and the Built Environment</li> <li>2. Toronto Public Health. The Walkable City: Neighbourhood Design and Preferences, Travel Choices and Health. April 2012. (pg 1-30)</li> <li>3. Zimmerman (2005) Mass Transit Infrastructure and Urban Health. Journal of Urban Health.</li> </ol>
10. Mar 19	Resiliency, Global Health and Built Environments of the Future	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dannenberg et al. (2011) Chapter 16. Resiliency to Disasters</li> <li>2. Dannenberg et al. (2011) Chapter 23. Urban Health in Low-Middle-income countries</li> <li>3. Dannenberg et al. (2011) Chapter 24. Built Environments of the Future</li> </ol>
11. Mar 26	Student Group Project Presentations	Groups 1-4
12. Apr 2	Student Group Project Presentations	Groups 5-8

## Assignments- Detailed Description

### **Evaluation**

As the University of Toronto's Faculty of Arts and Science Grading Policy states (at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/general/grading-policy>), the various possible grades are defined as follows:

A (80 - 100%) Excellent: Strong evidence of original thinking; good organization; capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base.

B (70-79%) Good: Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with literature

C (60-69%) Adequate: Student who is profiting from the university experience; understanding of the subject matter and ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.

D (50-59%) Marginal: Some evidence of familiarity with the subject matter and some evidence that critical and analytic skills have been developed.

F (0-49%) Inadequate: Little evidence of even superficial understanding of subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited or irrelevant use of literature.

### **A1- Preparation and Contribution– 20%**

20% of the final grade will be comprised of participation and contribution to class learning and discussion. As this course is carried out in a seminar format, students are expected to actively engage in critical thinking and thoughtful reflection about how knowledge can be applied to identify, describe and solve real-world problems. Students are encouraged to integrate evidence about the impacts of the built environment on health gained from required readings, presentations and other materials, with their own academic and personal experiences. Thus, it is essential that students read the required materials as part of their preparation for weekly class discussion. Each student will also be asked to provide a brief verbal summary (3-5 min; no slides or other visuals allowed) from one of their own Weekly Log entries (see A2- Built Environment and Health Log) that is relevant to the topic being discussed in class that day. Each student will be assigned a presentation date at the beginning of the term.

### **A2- Built Environment and Health Log (individual)- 20%, due February 26 and April 2**

For each week of the course beginning the week of January 15 and ending the week of March 26 (week 1, reading week, and week 12 are not included), students will maintain a weekly log on the Built Environment and Health. The log will be handed in for grading twice during the term. The first submission is due on **February 26** and will include the first 5 entries; the second submission is due on **April 2** and will include only the final 5 entries. The initial submission is worth 10% of your final grade, and the final submission is also worth 10% of your final grade, for a total of 20%. This exercise provides an opportunity for students to recognize and briefly discuss issues in the built environment encountered outside of the course (in their daily lives) that can have an impact on health. Sources may include media reports, conversations with friends and family, readings, extracurricular activities, observations, traveling around the city, etc. For each of the 10 entries, students will identify 1 'issue' relevant to the topic(s) being discussed in class that week, and document and reflect upon the issue in their log. Each entry will be no more than 1 page (8 ½ X 11 inch pages, 1 inch margins, 1.5 spacing, 12 point font).

Each entry must:

- Clearly identify the issue, how you became aware of it, why you chose to include it in your log

- Briefly discuss the issue from any applicable perspectives or approach that has been discussed in the course
- Provide your own reflections and reference any findings from the assigned class readings that are relevant to your written discussion.

### **A3 – Local Neighbourhood Case Study (groups of 3-4)- 40%**

Groups of students (assigned by the instructor) will choose a neighbourhood case study (to be further defined during the 1<sup>st</sup> two weeks of the course). Using knowledge gained from class sessions and readings, students will conduct an in-depth analysis of their case study, including elements of the built environment that promote or discourage physical activity, make the neighbourhood safe or unsafe, inviting or hostile; elements that make good public spaces; and planning tools or policies that are being used or could be used to manipulate the built environment to influence healthy behaviours or deter unhealthy behaviours.

Each group of students will need to:

- Define a chosen neighbourhood and explain why you defined the boundaries as you did
- Walk in the neighbourhoods to get a sense of how you feel and what the neighbourhood is about. (*Please stay safe and walk in groups during daylight hours*)
- Think about your personal reaction to being in the neighbourhood spaces (do you feel content? Safe? Anxious? Would you feel comfortable walking regularly through the neighbourhood? Are there destinations that you would walk to?)
- Apply some of the concepts of the course to the neighbourhood being examined, such as, but not limited to physical activity, food access, injury risk, mental health, vulnerable populations, access to nature, and discuss how they might impact individual or population health.
- ***Safety guidelines: Only walk your neighbourhoods in daylight, in groups for two or more and avoid locations that are deemed to be risky. We will discuss this further as a class.***

The Neighbourhood case study project is to be submitted and graded in three phases:

1. **Proposal (10%), due January 29:** Each group will provide one proposal document of no more than 2 pages in length (8 ½ X 11 inch pages, 1 inch margins, 1.5 spacing, 12 point font) on **January 29**. The proposal should include: title, neighbourhood to be examined (boundaries, brief description), purpose of the project, your biggest issue(s) or question(s) within the neighbourhood that you propose to address, draft schedule of tasks to complete the project, proposed outline/major sections, and any resources that you plan to use (e.g., journal articles, reports). Each proposal must have a cover page with the names of all the group members, the course name and assignment, title, and date of submission (not included in the 2 page limit).
2. **Case Study Report (20%), due March 19:** Each group will submit one final project report of no more than 10 pages (8 ½ X 11 inch pages, 1 inch margins, 1.5 spacing, 12 point font) on March 19. Tables, charts, lists, bibliographic references and graphics/images may be included and will not be counted as part of the 10 pages. Each report must have a cover page with the names of all the group members, the course name and assignment, title, and date of submission (not included in 10 page limit). The report will be evaluated on the following criteria:
  - Demonstrates understanding of the exercise
  - Demonstrates knowledge of the subject with explanations and elaboration
  - Applies concepts learned in class and readings

- Includes complete references where needed, in a consistent and logical referencing system
- Format is consistent throughout (headings, captions)
- Figures and tables are presented logically to reinforce text
- Demonstrates a collective group effort (students should be able to tell what they contributed to if asked)

3. **Presentation (10%), due March 26 or April 2:** Student groups will deliver a 15-minute presentation on either March 26 or April 2. The presentation will provide an overview of their neighbourhood project, findings and recommendations. All group members should participate in the presentation. Presentations should demonstrate understanding and knowledge of the neighbourhood and related issues, and show original thought and creativity. Slides and/or other visuals may be included. Following each presentation, the presenters will answer any questions and lead a 5-10 minute class discussion.

#### **A4 – Briefing Notes (individual)– 20%, due February 12**

Many public and private sector organizations require Briefing Notes for decision-makers who are too busy to research pressing issues themselves but who nonetheless need relevant information and analysis, succinctly presented, on a timely basis. Each student will prepare one Briefing Note on a built environment issue of their choice. Briefing Notes should be written for government decision-makers at the local level (e.g., a manager within Toronto City Planning, or the local Medical Officer of Health), or at the provincial level (e.g., Ontario Minister of Health). It is important to have a critical perspective and balanced approach when writing Briefing Notes. Editorial commentaries and advocacy positions are strongly discouraged.

The briefing note is due on February 12 and is worth 20% of your final grade. The Briefing Note should be no more than 3 pages (8 ½ X 11 inch pages, 1 inch margins, 1.5 spacing, 12 point font), not including references or title page. This will require some out of class research to gather background data- much of which can be done on the Internet. Please use appropriate citations for all data sources and references. While the format may vary, Briefing Notes typically include the following:

1. Issue statement: What is the policy issue (i.e., the problem that needs to be solved by government)?
2. Background: Why is it an issue? Who is affected? What legislation/regulations/programs have to be taken into account? Which groups have an active interest in this issue and what are their views?
3. Analysis: What are the main options for addressing this issue? What are the pros and cons (costs and benefits) of each option?
4. Recommendation: Which option do you recommend? Why?
5. References: Cite the sources of key arguments and evidence.

The Briefing Note must:

- Have a cover page with your name, the course name and assignment, title, and date of submission (not included in the 3 page count)
- Be formatted on 8 ½ X 11 inch pages with 1 inch margins, 1.5 spacing, 12 point font
- Be spell-checked and proofread
- Include headings and sub-headings where appropriate
- Present references in a standard format -- a separate page of references is not included in the 3 page count

- Have pages numbered
- “bullet points” must provide adequate explanation of each point (i.e., a “laundry list” without adequate explanation is not acceptable).

Some tips on writing briefing notes are attached. See also *How to Write a Briefing Note* by Susan Doyle.  
<http://web.uvic.ca/%7Esdoyle/E302/Notes/WritingBriefingNotes.html>