ARCHITECTURE OF THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT

Black Flag, 1971, Christiane Pflug

2:30

Course time: 9:30am to 12:30pm on Wednesdays, Main Lecture Room, UWSA
Synchronous online with Teams link for students with medical notes

Course Professor: Val Rynnimeri, Email: vrynnime@uwaterloo.ca

Teaching Assistants:
Aurora Xiaozhu Chi at axchi@uwaterloo.ca

Office hours and class test help sessions either online on Teams or in person.
Availability to be arranged in discussion with the class, or on request by individual students.

We acknowledge that the School of Architecture is located on the traditional territory of the Neutral, Anishinaabeg and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes 10 kilometres on each side of the Grand River.
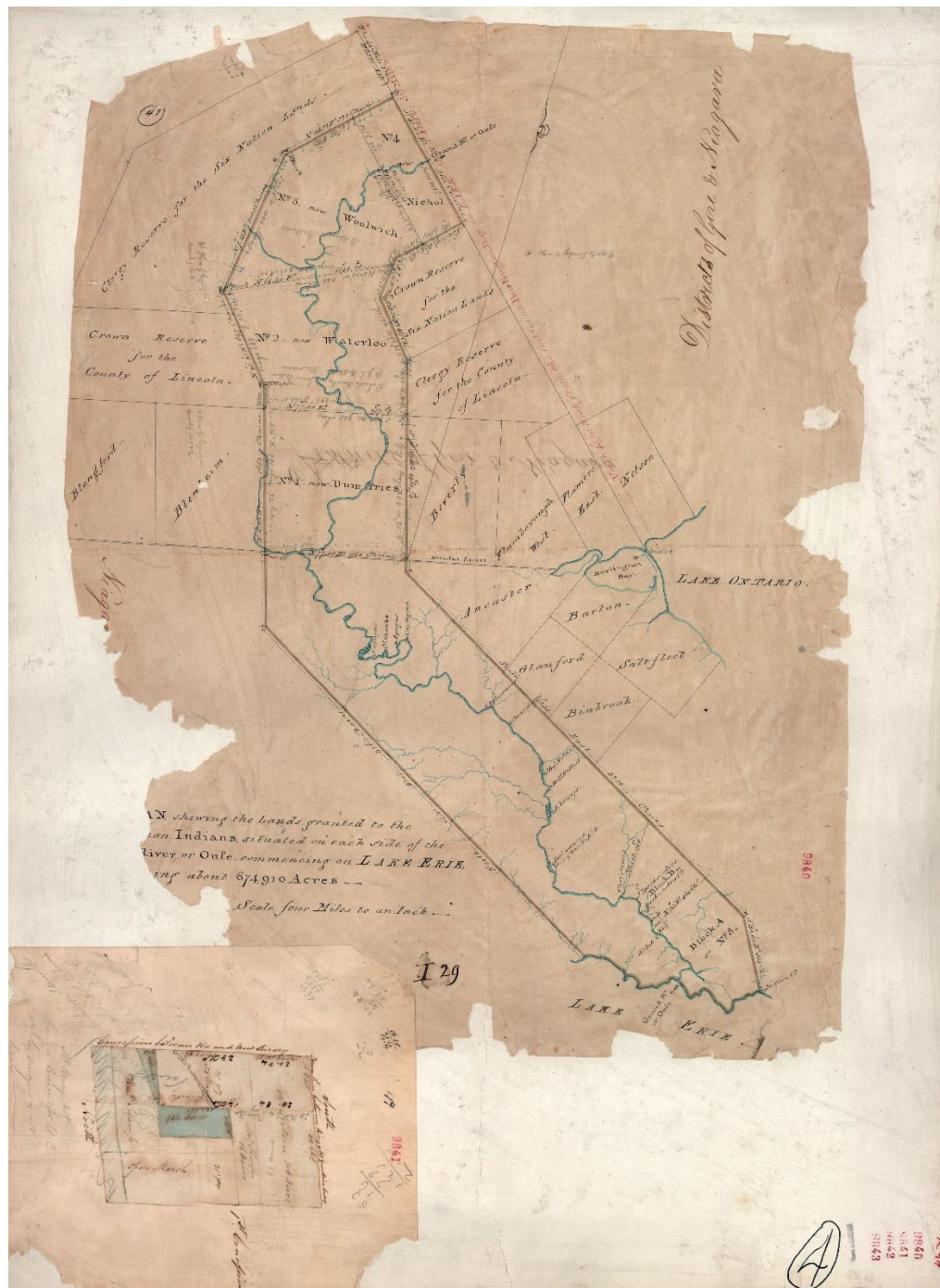
Some mischievous spirit has defined America as a country that has moved from barbarism to decadence without enjoying any intermediary phase of civilization. The formula could be more correctly applied to the towns of the New World, which pass from freshness to decay without ever being simply old.

It is not simply that they have been newly built; they were built so as to be renewable as quickly as they were put up, that is, badly. When new districts are being created, they are hardly integral elements of the urban scene; they are too gaudy, too new; too gay for that. They are more like stands in a fairground or the pavilions of some international exhibition, built to last only a few months. After that lapse of time, the fair closes and the huge gewgaws lapse into decay; the facades begin to peel, rain and soot leave their grimy trails, the style goes out of fashion, and the original layout disappears through the demolitions caused by some new building fever.

Claude Levi-Strauss,
Tristes Tropiques

This change (in the relative environmental presence of architecture and objects) has not just shifted the centre of gravity from architecture to design but has in fact created a new metropolitan theorem. This theorem recognizes that changes in the metropolis take place not only through the construction of architectural structures, road systems or urban services, but also through the renewal of the system of objects and individual commodities that improve and transform the cultural and technical fitness of places for habitation, creating the city of the present inside that of the past and that of the future inside that of the present one.

Andrea Branzi,
Learning from Milan

To study everyday life would be a completely absurd undertaking, unable even to grasp anything of its object, if this study was not explicitly for the purpose of transforming everyday life.

Guy Debord,
Perspectives for Conscious Alterations in Everyday Life

Sous les paves, la plage. (*Under the paving stones is the beach.)*

1968 student motto in the Paris barricades

Well, sir, it's this rug I had. It really tied the room together.
Jeff "the Dude" Lebowski in "The Big Lebowski"

THE ARCH 327 COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Arch 327 course is an introduction to the structure, organization and form of urban environments like towns, cities, metropolitan regions and global networks as understood through their urban architecture. The historical and contemporary forces that determine the creation and development of such urban places will be examined. Topics include the urban plan as a generative form, urban building types, urban morphology and the shape of the public realm, infrastructure as both system and architectural object, nature and the park, and speculation, real estate and governmental urban development controls. Of special interest will be analyses of the historically evolved traditional city, Modernism, the Garden City and suburb, and comprehensive urban master plans.

SOME USEFUL THOUGHTS ON CITY-BUILDING

Planning and Design

The city as it was in the past, as it is today, and as it could be built, will be the broad subject of this course. Primarily, the course will offer a basic introduction to the range of urban design and planning theories and practices in play today. Along with this broad view there will be an equal focus on the relationship between the city's built fabric and its constituent architecture. In the first weeks especially, it will coordinate with your 3A studio project and lay out basic planning and urban design frameworks for the City of Toronto.

To architecture students, urban study and the abstract policy-driven methodology of urban planning at times seems un-architectural, either moving into generalized territory like social policy or the statistical minutiae of development statistics. This outlook seems to have little to do with the pleasure of designing and making physical things: streets, parks, squares, buildings, gardens and objects of daily use to name a few.

To experienced architects, however, the city has often been the field of their creative speculation, one that gives a unifying ground to all of their other design work and theoretical frameworks. The city, like the "Dude" Lebowski's rug in the film "The Big Lebowski", is the framework which pulls the design work of an ensemble of disparate individuals together. Often fragmentary, the city is a collective work built out of their architectures. Speculation, furthermore, has a twofold meaning: as a creative theoretical understanding or project, or as a purely capitalistic economic venture. For architects, the former gives a broad universalizing significance to individual building and design works, and the latter, the economic one, is the socio-economic driver of much of professional practice in architecture. A working professional architect needs a job as 19th century Chicago architect H.H Richardson so pithily observed, " I'll plan anything a man wants, from a cathedral to a chicken coop. That's how I make my living".

Differences between Urban Planning and Urban Design

Urban planning today, and especially as practiced by both public and private actors in the US and Canada, usually stops its working process at the level of public policy and regulation of land use. It seeks to control the broad aspects of building form using legal or abstracted guideline instruments like density and area limits, building setbacks and massing envelopes. Planning often remains satisfied with being a kind of referee for a very competitive financial game of privately driven economically speculative urban development and its control and shaping by government for the greater public good. This refusal to specifically shape the physical form of our cities is usually built into planning acts and founding legislation of most American and Canadian planning systems, a situation that for most architects is simply wrong-headed and frustrating if the desired goal is a well-designed urban place.

Urban design often appears to old line urban planners to be the reverse of what might be considered good urban planning methodology. Professional planners typically think of architects as being overly pre-occupied with the building's physicality, its form and material exposition, and its ultimate appearance. Planners are convinced that architects are unwilling to understand or even recognize the underlying social and economic processes at work in urban development. This professional split of purpose and tools, once very pronounced, has, over the last decade, been papered over as planners in big cities especially, are seeing the value in a more direct building form oriented planning process. They are unwilling, however, to reevaluate the planning tools for built form in cities that have been in place since the end of WW2 giving rise to new problems.

The Big Picture

In this situation, the big question for architects is, where is urban design to find its place in the "big picture" of city building with all of its actors: urban planners, engineers, landscape architects, land developers, politicians, activists and citizens, and also, other architects? In contrast to urban planning, the emphasis in urban design is, and has always been, on the desirable concrete built result, the city itself as an object of objects, with a broader set of designated and protected liminal spaces that allows all to co-exist and function effectively, and elegantly. Urban design, as is practiced in all its various ideological and methodological outlooks, is a design discipline which has filled that gap in the relationship between the city as an object of policy and functional control, and the city's designed and evolved physical form. It is a discipline which gives pre-eminence to the urban project, and not necessarily only to good urban policy and regulation of urban functions, building densities, and socio-political goals.

The detailed physical form and character of the city is the goal of urban designers, and not an end result based solely on adherence to good policy as is practiced by planning professionals. For that reason, urban designers in practice today have usually been trained primarily in architecture or landscape architecture schools. Urban design is the professional territory of architects for built form and landscape architects for public spaces.

The Place of the Urban Building Project

The urban building project at whatever scale will be a central focus in this course. Such a project whether it is a an urban district, a group of buildings, a building or even an interior like a shop or café will be defined with respect to the more concrete aspects of the city it finds itself in: its buildings,

neighbourhoods, streets, parks, infrastructures and institutions. Urban design is about conceiving and building a "big picture". It is **not** about creating super-sized multi-building architectural projects done at a large scale, and this must be emphasized in a course taught in an architecture school. Rather, it is about working the elements of the typical city's urban system laid out above, to find the place of the individual project in the layered palimpsest of all the works spanning back to the city's origins.

Urban design projects must deal with issues that are normally unfamiliar or even peripheral to architects' primary concerns, those of programmatic, formal or technical concerns. Instead, in an urban design, property relationships, social divisions, politics, finance of real estate speculation, public regulation of that speculation, and the interaction on every level between buildings and the physical implications of the urban infrastructures that sustain our cities, all become key issues and elements of the urban design project.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The Subject of the Course

The course will generally examine urban design as the middle ground between the two disciplines of architecture and urban planning. This increasingly widespread view of the urban design profession emphasizes urban projects as a means for transformation of the city. In such a view, architectural projects are urban interventions that reify form and structure for more ephemeral issues of economic and social planning, the impact of new technologies and infrastructures, the role of capital investment and profit in financial speculation in urban land development, urban governance, politics, and how the social polity struggles to shape the search for a shared urban destiny.

This middle ground of the actual building the city will be the main subject of this course. The course will offer a range of views, and it will seek to offer useful tools and concepts for the architectural actor… maybe even the 'player'… in the economic and political dynamics by which cities are conceived and developed.

The broad architecture of the city or the "architecture of the urban environment" and that of the broader metropolitan area will be presented both as an analytical discourse with its own terminology, and a synthetic discourse emphasizing the physical construction of the city as a continuing series of projects. Its approach will be founded in architecture as the ultimate physical manifestation of the entire complex discourse that goes into shaping the broader urban development process and, even more, shaping the places in which we all live, work and play.

What the Course is Not

This course will not offer any ideal urban design approaches or solutions as a panacea for unaffordable housing or climate change (as examples). There will be no favoured ideological viewpoint from which design will be made easy; no simple formulas like "Modernism" or "New Urbanism" or "Landscape Urbanism" or the "New Metropolitan Field". The goal of the course is to offer the tools to the student to make them a more sophisticated critic of the city and a better urban designer regardless of their ideological outlook.

Primary Learning Objectives of the Course

The primary umbrella objectives of the course are threefold and will be presented in chronological order in the course in increments of four lectures. Within each section there are also more detailed objectives:

- The first course objective is to provide the theoretical and practical background materials to facilitating the architectural design projects and the consideration of their urban settings in the parallel Arch 392 studio. At the conclusion of this section of the 327 course, students will have a practical methodological introduction to the urban design theory and practice at the heart of the Greater Toronto Area's dialectic of capitalist private land development, and the activist/societal/public opposition to its shaping of community dwelling and public space. Urban development methodologies globally and in the GTA locally are shaped by the deeply rooted forces of financial speculation and those frameworks of urban regulation seated in provincial and municipal government and planning law. Citizen activism is the third force in this political decision-making about the future of the communities that we all live in. In particular the objectives of this section of Arch 327 will focus on the role of buildings in shaping urban places, and how their design plays out in the city's urban land systems, property organizations, land assemblies, urban density descriptions and statistics, urban zoning practice, infrastructure rights-of-way, speculative pro-formas, and the social policy goals for affordable housing. At the conclusion of this section, the student will be able to undertake a basic urban design project within a framework of regulations and in an existing urban setting. As well, the student will be able to develop a set of planning statistics for their project work.

- The second broad objective offers a general theoretical context for the first objective, and introduces an analytically based "urban science" as articulated by urban theorist Aldo Rossi. At the end of this section, the student will have a theoretical picture of the city and its metropolitan region as an evolved environment, or territory, one shaped by both its history and the sense of its broader urban destiny moving into the future. The student, at the end of this section, will be able to analyze an urban place, examine it with a critical theoretical eye, and begin to develop an understanding of its evolving built form. Such an outlook as Rossi offers will be very useful for student work in the upcoming Rome term offered in the 4A term.

- The third course objective introduces a survey of the variant urban paradigms in play underlying today's global urbanism design work. After this section, the student will be aware of the diverging views of the city and its futures that will confront them in their future practice. Topics from the third objective include the traditional evolved city and its complex negotiated cultural traditions and conflicts, the Garden City and its global variations, the Socialist City and its rejection of capitalist speculation, the Sustainable City, and Modernism and its technocratic impulses for technology and an ongoing unstoppable search for "the new" which underlies all of the above variants. Lastly the course will offer an introductory discussion of the informal city, those massive areas of urbanism built outside any official system of planning and

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governance  but  which  house  probably  the  larger  part  of
humanity.
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LIST OF READINGS

Available on Teams

- **Aldo Rossi, Architecture of the City, MIT press**
- **JB Jackson, A Pair of Ideal Landscapes**
- **Rafael Moneo, On Typology**
- **Design Quarterly 108, Vacant Lottery**
- **Phil Monture, Land Rights, A Global Solution for the Six Nations of the Grand River**
- John Sewell, selections from **Shape of the City**
- Le Corbusier, **The City of Tomorrow**, (pp. 106-126), (pp. 157-247)
- Gerald Hodge, **Planning Canadian Communities**, (pp. 137-169), (pp. 221-248)
- Michael Hough, **Cities and Natural Processes**, selections
- Rynnimeri, **Is There a Green Sustainable Urban Design Narrative?,** Eco WebTown, 2011, Journal of Sustainable Design, www.ecowebtown.it

COURSE WORK AND ASSESSMENT

Reading Assignment 1 Planning Definitions and Land Systems, at home, assigned early	**30**
Reading Assignment 2 Theory, mainly Rossi and others, at home, assigned early	**30**
Final Urban Design Report, 24 April 2020, at home, assigned early	**40**
Total	**100**

TIMETABLE, COURSE WORK AND DATES

Date	Lecture Topic	Cases and Examples	Readings for the Week
Week 1 **January 11** **Wednesdays**	**Course Introduction** **Urban Plans and Urban Planning** **Uneven Design** **Land-Use Planning and Speculation** **Land-Use Planning and Regulation** **Zoning, Controls, Guidelines**	**Toronto Main Streets** **Toronto Tall Building Guidelines** **Cambridge Gaslight District**	**Hodge, Planning and Zoning, (pp. 138-169), (pp. 221-248)**
Week 2 **January 18**	**Infrastructure, Networks and Transportation** **Infrastructure as Object**	**The GTA Region** **City Beautiful Chicago** **Metrolinx corridors** **The Big Dig Boston**	**Jackson, A Pair of Ideal Landscapes**
Week 3 **January 25**	**Land Systems:** **Toronto and the GTA** **Waterloo Regions Linear City** **and the Haldimand Tract**	**Toronto's city grid evolution** **GTHA Land System to today** **Waterloo Region, regional rail and the ION LRT**	**Montour, Land Rights**
Week 4 **February 1**	**Downtown Master Plans** **The Development Package Re-urbanization** **Gentrification** **Main Streets/Avenues/LRTs**	**The Missing Middle** **St. Lawrence** **Regent Park Toronto** **Ataritiri (now West Donlands)** **The Distillery District**	**Vacant Lottery**
Week 5 **February 8**	**Rossi's,' Architecture of the City'** **The Pre-Modern Historical City** **Urban Artifacts, Monuments, Typology, and Morphology** **Primary Elements, Permanence**	**The Traditional Western City** **Damascus and the great Umayyad Mosque** **Vicenza and Padua Palazzi della Ragione**	**Rossi, Introduction and Ch.1 (Description, Classification, Typology, Urban Artifacts), (pp. 21-61)**
Week 6 **February 15** **Assignment 1 30% Planning Definitions and Land Systems Due on the 15th of February**	**Residential Districts** **Architecture and Public Space**	**The Insula or Perimeter Block** **Torino, Barcelona, Algiers** **GTA suburbs (studio)**	**Rossi, Ch.2 (Study Areas, Residential Areas (pp. 62-85), (Primary Elements, Morphology, Transformation) (pp. 86-101**

Week 7 **February 22**	**Reading Week**		
Week 8 **March 1**	Locus and Destiny	The Street, Square and Market Timbuktu, Locus and Destiny Lagos, the rapid growth city and the market, urban design in the Age of European Colonialism and After The Pre Modernist Traditional City, Asti, Torino, Wren's London, then Haussmann's Early Modern Paris	Rossi, Chapter 3 (all) on Locus
Week 9 **March 8**	Rossi's Urban Dynamics and the Evolving Development of the City's Fabric The Capital City and Locus	The Toronto Beaches Washington **Ottawa**	**Coop Week** Rossi, Chapter 4, Urban Dynamics, selections TBA
Week 10 **March 15**	The International Garden City	Hampstead Garden Suburb, Letchworth and Global Cases Toronto's Don Mills. 1950 circa The GTA Suburbs	**Coop Week** Le Corbusier, selections from "The City of Tomorrow"
Week 11 **March 22**	Modernisms Corbusier's Radiant City Infrastructure and the Metropolis	Chicago/New York skyscrapers The Radiant City… Barbican, Lasnamae Tallinn Soviet New City, Brasilia, Firminy near Lyon, Michezani in Zanzibar	**Studio work, Mon, Thurs** Sewell and more, TBA

Week 12
 	
March 29
 	
Assignment 2 30% Theory, Aldo Rossi plus, Due on the 29th March
	Post-Modernisms:
	
	  New Urbanism
	
	  Neo-Modernism
	
	Edge Cities
	
	In class review for the Final Design Exam
		Seaside and Cornell in Markham
		
		The "Healthy Village"
		
		Fletcher's Meadow
		
		Yorkdale and Square One	

Week 13 **April 5** **In class review for the Final Design Exam**	Urban Parks Green Infrastructure The Green Hybrid Metropolis The Informal City	Olmsted's Central Park Seaton New Town Zanzibar, Michenzani	Hough, "Cities and Natural Processes", (pp 32-96) Rynnimeri, Ecowebtown article
Last Weeks **April 28, Last Day of Exams**	**Final Urban Design Exam, assigned in early March due on April 28, Last day of exams** **40% of the term**		

UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO POLICIES

Remote Course Delivery Platforms & Communication

During remote learning, we will be using additional platforms to deliver, organize and share course content, learning and work. Here is a breakdown of tools we will use in this course:

Lectures and group seminar contact will be on MS Teams, Course Administration and announcements will be via LEARN content and LEARN email.

Course Time Zone

All dates and times communicated in the document are expressed in Eastern Time (Local time in Waterloo Ontario, Canada).

Winter 2023 COVID-19 Special Statement

Given the continuously evolving situation around COVID-19, students are to refer to the University of Waterloo's developing information resource page (https://uwaterloo.ca/coronavirus/) for up-to-date information on academic updates, health services, important dates, co-op, accommodation rules and other university level responses to COVID-19.

Student Notice of Recording

The course's official Notice of Recording document is found on the course's Teams site. This document outlines shared responsibilities for instructors and students around issues of privacy and security. Each student is responsible for reviewing this document. In the event classes pivot to online delivery, instructors may need to record lectures. In this case, the course's official Notice of Recording document will be found on the course's Teams site.

Late Work

Grades for late work submitted on LEARN without advance notice to the course instructor or teaching assistants will be penalized 5% for each late day(with the exception of the "late passes" described below). There will also be a reasonable amount of flexibility framed around the hand-in time and date to accommodate the more general issues associated with digital submissions.

Only in the case of justified medical or personal reasons will these penalties be waived, and only if these have been officially submitted to the Undergraduate Student Services Co-Ordinator, and accepted by the Undergraduate Office. Students seeking accommodations due to COVID-19, are to follow Covid-19-related accommodations as outlined by the university here: (https://uwaterloo.ca/coronavirus/academic-information#accommodations).

There will be an inclusion of two "late passes" per student over the term – whereby students can opt to submit one (or two) deliverables at a later date without penalty or justification. This date will be approved by the course instructor. We hope this slight easing will be helpful for student stress and health management.

Passing Grades

The standard minimum passing grade in each ARCH course is 50% with the following exceptions: the minimum passing grade is 60% for all studio courses (ARCH 192, ARCH 193, ARCH 292, ARCH 293, ARCH 392, ARCH 393, ARCH 492, and ARCH 493). Grades below the specified passing grade result in a failing grade for the course.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage you to seek out mental health supports when they are needed. Please reach out to Campus Wellness (https://uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness/) and Counselling Services (https://uwaterloo.ca/campus-wellness/counselling-services).
We understand that these circumstances can be troubling, and you may need to speak with someone for emotional support. Good2Talk (https://good2talk.ca/) is a post-secondary student helpline based in Ontario, Canada that is available to all students.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Commitment

The School of Architecture is committed to foster and support equity, diversity and inclusion. If you experience discrimination, micro-aggression, or other forms of racism, sexism, discrimination against 2SLGBTQ+, or disability, there are several pathways available for addressing this:

A) If you feel comfortable bringing this up directly with the faculty, staff or student who has said or done something offensive, we invite you, or a friend, to speak directly with this person. People make mistakes and dealing them directly in the present may be the most effective means of addressing the issue.

B) you can reach out to either the Undergraduate office, Graduate office, or Director (Anne Bordeleau). If you contact any of these people in confidence, they are bound to preserve your anonymity and follow up on your report.

C) You can choose to report centrally to the Equity Office. The Equity Office can be reached by emailing equity@uwaterloo.ca. More information on the functions and services of the equity office can be found here: https://uwaterloo.ca/human-rights-equity-inclusion/about/equity-office.

D) Racial Advocacy for Inclusion, Solidarity and Equity (RAISE) is a student-led Waterloo Undergraduate Student Association (WUSA) service launching in the Winter 2019 term. RAISE serves to address racism and xenophobia on the University of Waterloo campus with initiatives reflective of RAISE's three pillars of Education and Advocacy, Peer-to-Peer Support, and Community Building. The initiatives include but are not limited to: formal means to report and confront racism, accessible and considerate peer-support, and organization of social events to cultivate both an uplifting and united community. You can report an incident using their online form.

Academic integrity, grievance, discipline, appeals and a note for students with disabilities:

Academic integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo community are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check the Office of Academic Integrity for more information.]

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70, Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department's administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity to avoid committing an academic offence, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. [Check the Office of Academic Integrity for more information.] A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about "rules" for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course instructor, academic advisor, or the undergraduate associate dean. For information on categories of offences and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71, Student Discipline. For typical penalties, check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties

Note for students with disabilities: AccessAbility Services, located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with AccessAbility Services at the beginning of each academic term.

Turnitin.com: Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit the alternate assignment.