



J.A. Nichols, *in another place*, 2002

QUEER URBANISM

URP 610 / ARCH 509

Winter 2026

Instructor:	Gus Wendel, PhD Fishman Fellow
Email:	guswen@umich.edu
Class times:	Thurs, 8:30 - 11:30am
Location:	2210, A&AB
Credits:	3

Course Overview

This course introduces students to key concepts, theories, and histories of queer urban spaces and spatial processes. It situates the formation of sexual identities alongside the formation of the modern city, paying close attention to structures of spatial marginalization as well as forms of resistance, care, and community. Central to the course is a critical examination of the ways sexual space is entangled with gender, race, class, disability, and citizenship as constitutive dimensions of urban life. Students will consider how practices of planning and design shape, reinforce, and sometimes subvert these spatial and social relations.

Learning Outcomes

The course is designed to provide students with a foundation for understanding the historical and theoretical interrelations between sexuality and space. It also equips students with the conceptual tools to develop their own approaches and frameworks for research and practice in architecture, urban planning, and urban design. At the completion of the course, students are expected to:

- Understand discourses that link the formation of sexual identity to the emergence of the modern city.
- Understand how the entanglement of sexuality and space produces hierarchical relationships of power, reflected in and reinforced through the built environment.
- Discuss and explain the role of urban planning and design in both reinforcing sexual-spatial hierarchies, and their potential to undo or transform them.

Course Requirements

This course is a graduate-level seminar, structured primarily around reading and discussion of entire texts, both old and new. It will integrate reading and discussion with short, situated lectures, and student-led group case studies. In addition to regular attendance and in-class participation, students will be expected to participate in a collective workshop initiative to relate and reference critical concepts and ideas to actual or envisioned practices in designing urban interventions. This will lead to a final written and graphic project that synthesizes students' approaches to the concept of *queer urbanism* (no prior graphic design experience required).