



# **Black Box**

**ARC W694**

**Vertical Studio**

**University of Texas at Austin / School of Architecture**

**Summer 2020**

**Martin Haettasch - First Summer Session**

**Dean Almy - Second Summer Session**

**ARC w694**

**Vertical Studio**

**University of Texas at Austin / School of Architecture**

**Summer 2020**

Mon / Tue / Wed / Thurs / Fri 9-12

Martin Haettasch m.haettasch@utexas.edu

office hours by appointment

## Studio Description

This Vertical Studio will be taught over two summer sessions; the first one is taught by Martin Haettasch, the second by Dean Almy. Both sessions are conceived as a conceptual whole, while each session ("Part 1 / Part 2") may temporarily isolate relevant issues into discrete assignments to serve as building blocks towards a comprehensive project.

### Course Work

Students will typically work individually over the course of the summer session. Specific assignments may require work in groups of two students or more, and will be introduced accordingly.

## Studio Project – Black Box

This summer 2020 vertical studio will work towards a final project through a series of discrete steps and assignments. Temporarily isolating issues such as operational thinking/formal logic, spatial production, program and site, each assignment will culminate in a "final" deliverable. Each deliverable is meant to both stand as an artifact in its own right, communicating a set of ideas, values and processes and at the same time be the starting point for the next set of explorations. The final project for a small public building in the city will therefore not be preconceived as being defined by its program (as is far too often the case, if we think of designing "a school," "a courthouse," or "a hotel" ...), but rather as the result of a multifaceted series of inquiries across scales.

## Studio Structure - A Collection of Architectural Artifacts

The studio will consist of a series of discrete one-week assignments. Each assignment will temporarily isolate specific areas of inquiry and typically result in a single deliverable. Each deliverable is considered an artifact in its own right and is to be treated as a finite and refined piece of architectural representation. The process by which each artifact is generated may vary; generally, all artifacts will be considered "slow" drawings/models to be repeatedly revised and adjusted, possibly generating several versions and work steps along the way. The body of work produced throughout the studio will add up to outline the architecture of the given studio project without questioning the agency of each artifact to stand as a temporary conclusion of a set of interdependent ideas.

### First Session (Martin Haettasch)

#### 1. **Box – Inside Out** (Physical/Digital Model)

This assignment will address design process, formal and spatial logic through a series of explorations through both physical and digital models.

#### 2. **Box – Projection** (2d Drawings)

Students will move from using the drawing as a descriptive tool towards using parallel projection as a speculative device.

**3. Unpacking the Box** (Precedent Study, Exploded Axon)

Students will familiarize themselves with strategies for the project at hand through the study of selected precedents.

**4. Box – Content** (Diagram/Drawing)

Combining knowledge from all previous assignments this assignment will move towards a coherent organizational strategy for movement and program of the given studio project.

**5. Box – Conditions** (Projective Drawing – Interior)

Through a single “slow” drawing student will study key relationships (spatial/material/structural) between interior spaces of their project.

**Second Session (Dean Almy)**

**6. A Void In the City** (Figure Ground Plan, Site Sections)

Urban Context will be introduced as a factor impacting the emergent project.

**7. A Box in the City - Projective Analysis** (Perspective/Axon)

Students will study latent relationships between their intervention and the city through a single “slow” drawing.

**8. Box Cut – Transformation** (Section)

The project will find its temporary conclusion in response to internal and external morphogenic pressures in a series of sectional drawings.

**9. Affect Drawing** (Exterior Perspective)

A study of the project's presence in the public realm of the city.

**10. Box – Inside/Outside** (Progression Drawing)

A single large-format drawing will conclude the project with a focus on the transition from the public realm of the city to the public space(s) of the interior.

## Studio Logistics

The studio will be taught as a remote studio through a variety of means of online instruction. The processes outlined below applies to the first summer session taught by Martin Haettasch and may differ for the second summer session.

### Weekly Structure

All assignments are designed as week-long exercises and will largely follow the same structure. Each one week assignment cycle will typically start and end on a Wednesday with a group review of the previous assignment and the handout of the next (see calendar).

### Crit Days

Remote crits will happen as “Individual Crits” or “Group Crits” as specified in the calendar. During individual crits each student will have the opportunity to discuss their work via shared screen with the instructor. Group crits will be informal review sessions in which a dialogue between both students and instructor and students among each other will be encouraged. These small group

sessions will typically be limited to four students/projects, and information will – as in individual crits – be presented via shared screen. Digital signup sheets for crit sessions will typically be available about a week in advance or at the beginning of each new assignment via CANVAS.

All in-person crits will happen via ZOOM. One single link will be sent out for each studio crit session regardless of format, and students will either be asked to join in during their assigned/chosen time(s), or – if a studio session starts with an all-studio-meeting – will be assigned to breakout rooms.

Additional formats for discussing student work (miro.com, slack, etc..) may be integrated into the studio as needed. Specific instructions will be given in advance.

### **Work Days**

Days specified in the calendar as “Work Days” will typically begin with an all studio meeting at 9.00 am via zoom (unless otherwise specified) to clarify assignments or address general questions. After the initial meeting, students will be free to work on their assignments/projects individually, or collectively via Zoom.

On work days the instructor will be available on demand for student questions during studio hours.

Work days may also be structured as needed

- to accommodate additional crits session (group or individual),
- for instructor presentations and lectures
- for the instructor to review and comment in written format on uploaded student work (see more under “Uploads”)

Announcements will be made by the instructor depending on need.

### **Uploads**

Students will have access to a shared studio folder on Box. All completed assignments are to be uploaded in this folder no later than 9.00 am on the assignment due date. In addition, the studio will use the folder to upload work in progress for review and/or markup by the instructor as needed.

### **Reviews**

One “final” review (with external reviewers) is scheduled for the end of the first summer session. In analogy to the spring semester’s final reviews this review will be structured as synchronous presentations and feedback from a panel of reviewers. Review requirements and modalities will be communicated in advance.

### **Class Recordings**

Class recordings are reserved only for the use of members of this class (students, TAs, and the instructor) and only for educational purposes. Recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

## Evaluation Criteria

While each project contains certain quantifiable elements for evaluation, a significant portion of each grade is derived from broader and more subjective criteria. Student work will be evaluated according to its rigor and evolution over the semester. Grades are subject to deductions for late arrivals, absences, and late or incomplete work at the discretion of the instructor. Grading for an assignment is broken into four components, each of which is given roughly equal weight:

### ***Pursuit:***

the consistent and rigorous development and testing of ideas.

- The ability to formulate a query or thesis and pursue a self-determined concomitant method of inquiry
- The ability to identify and implement various processual mechanisms (software, sketch drawing and models, etc.) in the development of the design
- Initiative as demonstrated in work ethic – Does the student do what is asked; go beyond what is asked; direct their own efforts; eager to produce the next iteration of the design?

### ***Grasp:***

the ideas and understanding of the project at hand and integration of knowledge introduced in companion courses.

- A strong and clearly stated design objective
- Spatial acuity as demonstrated in plan – including reasonable disposition of programmatic elements and sectional development
- Synthetic and critical thinking; the ability to holistically organize a project as demonstrated through creative engagement with issues of materiality, structures and construction, structural and environmental system integration, building materials and assembly, sustainable practices, etc. in support of the design objective
- Structural competence and material sensitivity as demonstrated in wall thickness, floor plates, and assembly

### ***Resolution:***

of the design objective; the demonstration of competence, completeness, and finesse in the final design presentation.

- Quality of presentation; clarity of communication; appropriateness of media strategy and level of skill displayed through the work presented at all stages of the design process; technical documentation

### ***Engagement:***

the active participation in studio activities, leadership, collaboration, group discussions and reviews.

Students work will be evaluated according to its rigor and evolution over the semester. Grades are subject to deductions for absences, late work, and late arrivals at the discretion of each instructor.

## Grade Descriptions

### ***A/A- : excellent***

Project surpasses expectations in terms of inventiveness, appropriateness, visual language, conceptual rigor, craft, and personal development. Student pursues concepts and techniques above and beyond what is discussed in class. Project is complete on all levels.

### ***B+/B/B- : above average***

Project is thorough, well presented, diligently pursued, and successfully completed. Student pursues ideas and suggestions presented in class and puts in effort to resolve required projects. Project is complete on all levels and demonstrates potential for excellence.

### ***C+/C : average***

Project meets the minimum requirements. Suggestions made in class are not pursued with dedication or rigor. Project is incomplete in one or more areas.

### ***C-/D+/D/D- : poor***

Project is incomplete. Basic grasp of skill is lacking, visual clarity or logic of presentation are not level-appropriate. Student does not demonstrate the required competence and knowledge base.

### ***F : fail***

Project is unresolved. Minimum objectives are not met. Performance is not acceptable. Note that this grade will be assigned when students have excessive unexcused absences.

### ***X : excused incomplete***

Can be given only for legitimate reasons of illness or family emergency. Simply not completing work on time is not an adequate cause for assigning this evaluation. It may only be used after consultation with the Associate Deans' offices and with an agreement as to a new completion date. Work must be completed before the second week of the next semester in which you are enrolling, according to School of Architecture policy.

## Methodology

The primary subjects of the studio are the design potentials of techniques of building and siting. While students will be expected to produce exquisitely crafted documents of their design proposals at the site, building, and detail scales, specific software tools will not be dictated. General material and format considerations will be suggested by the instructor throughout the course, however, investigation and experimentation is strongly encouraged at all stages of production and design. In addition to digital production methods, portions of the studio process will include hand sketches and drawings as well as physical models.

## Attendance

Punctual and regular attendance is mandatory. Participation is expected. With three (3) unexcused absences, the student's final grade for the course will be lowered by a full letter grade. The final grade will be lowered by a full letter grade for each unexcused absence thereafter. Aside from religious observances, absences are only excused with written documentation of a medical issue or family

emergency. The student is responsible for completing work missed due to excused absences and initiating communication with the instructor to determine due dates.

If a student is late (5 minutes after the start of class) three (3) times, it will be counted as one (1) unexcused absence. Students should notify the instructor prior to class if lateness or absence is known in advance. Students must notify instructors directly regarding lateness or absences; Asking a classmate to inform the instructor is not acceptable.

### **Religious Observances**

A student shall be excused from attending classes of other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for the purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University policy requires students to notify each of their instructors as far in advance of the absence as possible so that arrangements can be made.

By UT Austin policy, you must notify the instructor of the pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, an assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

### **Academic Integrity**

Students who violate University policy on academic integrity are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic integrity will be strictly enforced.

Refer to the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website for official University policies and procedures on academic integrity:

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/academicintegrity.php>

University Code of Conduct: <http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/the-university/#universitycodeofconduct>

### **Mental Health and Support Services**

Taking care of your general well-being is an important step in being a successful student. If stress, test anxiety, racing thoughts, feeling unmotivated, or anything else is getting in your way, there are options available for help:

- In-house CARE counselor (see below)
- For immediate support
  - o Visit/call the Counseling and Mental Health Center (CMHC):  
M-F 8am-5pm | SSB, 5th floor | 512-471-3515 | [cmhc.utexas.edu](http://cmhc.utexas.edu)
  - o CMHC Crisis Line:  
24/7 | 512-471-2255 | [cmhc.utexas.edu/24hourcounseling.html](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/24hourcounseling.html)
- Free services at CMHC:
  - o Brief assessments and referral services: [cmhc.utexas.edu/gettingstarted.html](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/gettingstarted.html)
  - o Mental health & wellness articles: [cmhc.utexas.edu/commonconcerns.html](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/commonconcerns.html)
  - o MindBody Lab: [cmhc.utexas.edu/mindbodylab.html](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/mindbodylab.html)

**ARC w694**

**Vertical Studio**

**University of Texas at Austin / School of Architecture**

**Summer 2020**

Mon / Tue / Wed / Thurs / Fri 9-12

Martin Haettasch m.haettasch@utexas.edu

office hours by appointment

- o Classes, workshops, and groups: [cmhc.utexas.edu/groups.html](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/groups.html)

### **Care Program**

Counselors in Academic Residence (CARE) Program places licensed mental health professionals within the colleges or schools they serve in order to provide better access to mental health support for students who are struggling emotionally and/or academically.

Abby Simpson (LCSW) is the assigned CARE counselor for the School of Architecture. Faculty and staff may refer students to the CARE counselor or students may directly reach out to her. Please leave a message if she is unavailable by phone.

Abby Simpson, LCSW | BTL 114B | 512-471-3115 (M-F 8am-5pm)

[https://cmhc.utexas.edu/CARE\\_simpson.html](https://cmhc.utexas.edu/CARE_simpson.html)

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who require special accommodations must obtain a letter that documents the disability from the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students (471-6259 voice or 471-4641 TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing). This letter should be presented to the instructor in each course at the beginning of the semester and accommodations needed should be discussed at that time.

<http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>

### **BCAL**

Concerns regarding the safety or behavior of fellow students, Teaching Assistants (TA), or Professors can be reported to the Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050. Calls can be made anonymously. If something doesn't feel right, it probably isn't. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.



## Calendar

<b>Week 01</b>	Thurs	6/4	Studio Intro / Handout <b>"Assignment 1"</b>	<b>Box - Inside Out</b>	Physical Study Models
	Fri	6/5	Group Crits		
<b>Week 02</b>	Mon	6/8	Group Crits		3d Model
	Tue	6/9	Work Day		Operation Diagrams
	Wed	6/10	<b>"Assignment 1" review,</b> Handout <b>"Assignment 2"</b>		
	Thurs	6/11	Work Day	<b>Box - Projection</b>	Projection Drawings
	Fri	6/12	Individual Crits		Plans / Axonometric
<b>Week 03</b>	Mon	6/15	Group Crits		
	Tue	6/16	Work Day		
	Wed	6/17	<b>"Assignment 2" review,</b> Handout <b>"Assignment 3"</b>		
	Thurs	6/18	Work Day		Precedent Study
	Fri	6/19	Individual Crits		
<b>Week 04</b>	Mon	6/22	Group Crits	<b>Unpacking the Box</b>	
	Tue	6/23	Work Day		
	Wed	6/24	<b>"Assignment 3" review,</b> Handout <b>"Assignment 4"</b>		
	Thurs	6/25	Work Day		Performance / Program Diagrams
	Fri	6/26	Individual Crits		
<b>Week 05</b>	Mon	6/29	Group Crits	<b>Box - Content</b>	Re-Draw Plan/Section
	Tue	6/30	Work Day		
	Wed	7/1	<b>"Assignment 4" review,</b> Handout <b>"Assignment 5"</b>		
	Thurs	7/2	Work Day		
	Fri	7/3	Individual Crits		Analytical Axon, Affect, Material
<b>Week 06</b>	Mon	7/6	Group Crits		
	Tue	7/7	Work Day		Re-Draw
	Wed	7/8	Individual Crits		
	Thurs	7/9	<b>Final Review</b> (all assignments)		

*note:*

*This schedule is subject to change, and adjustments may be made during the semester. Please be available during class time throughout the semester. Requirements for reviews and Pinups will be announced.*