

**Graduate Program in Landscape Architecture**  
The University of Texas at Austin School of Architecture  
Syllabus Spring 2019

Course:	<b>LAR 696 Advanced Design: Landscape Architecture</b>
Studio Title:	<b>The Yucatán Coast Studio:</b>
	<b>Social, Economic and Environmental Integration in a Global Touristic Destination</b>
Unique numbers:	01700 (LAR 696), 01280 (ARC 696), 00911 (ARC 561R)
Course type:	Studio
Credits:	6
Instructor:	Gabriel Díaz Montemayor, ASLA, Assistant Professor of Landscape Architecture <a href="mailto:diaz.montemayor@utexas.edu">diaz.montemayor@utexas.edu</a>
Office location:	WMB (West Mall Office Building) Room 4.102C. Office telephone: (512)471-0752
Schedule:	Mondays & Wednesdays 1:00 - 5:00 p.m, Fridays 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
Location:	<b>GOL 3.108 West</b>
Office hours:	By appointment. Set up via email.

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**Catalog Description:**

**LAR 696 ADVANCED DESIGN: LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE**

Elective studios offering students an opportunity to explore particular topics in landscape, often in collaboration with architecture and community and regional planning students.

Prerequisite: Graduate standing, Landscape Architecture 695 with a grade of at least C, and consent of the graduate adviser.

Course number may be repeated for credit when the topics vary.

**ARC 696 ADV ARCH DESIGN**

Advanced problems in architectural design to help develop skills in areas of students' and faculty member's choice, including interior architecture and preservation, as well as landscape, urban, and sustainable design.

Prerequisite: Graduate standing, Architecture 694 or the equivalent, and consent of the graduate adviser.

Course number may be repeated for credit when the topics vary.

**ARC 561R ADV ARCH DESIGN**

Restricted to students in the School of Architecture. Architecture 661R is restricted to students participating in the Professional Residency Program.

Advanced problems in architectural design.

Prerequisite: Architecture 520E (or 520L) and 520G (or 530T) with a grade of at least C and satisfactory completion of third-year portfolio review.

Offered on the letter-grade basis only. Course number may be repeated for credit when the topics vary.

**Meeting Information:**

This studio will be executed in the revised approach to advanced design studio meeting times at the School of Architecture. In this context, we will meet three times a week for a total of ten contact hours: on Mondays from 1:00 to 5:00 pm, Wednesdays from 1:00 to 5:00 pm, and Fridays from 1:00 to 3:00 pm, to be spent working and collaborating in a design and planning studio environment.

## **Studio Description and Main Topics:**

### **The Yucatan Coast Studio:**

#### **Social, Economic, and Environmental Integration in a Global Touristic Destination**

Can an intensive presence of global tourism be sustainably integrated with local communities and cultures in a way that ensures a healthy and long-term future for the social, economic, and environmental aspects on the ground?

What is the role of the practice of twenty-first century urban planning, urban design, architecture and landscape architecture in achieving that?

The studio will explore the issues, stimuli and opportunities for a sustainable social and environmental mode of development for the coastal region of the Yucatan Peninsula close to Merida, the capital of the state of Yucatan, in Mexico. This part of the peninsula presents today with significant complexity to achieve a sustainable future. There is uncertainty. The 30 miles+ coastal strip, extending from Puerto Progreso (24 miles north of Merida) to the east, has seen in recent years the growth of coastal development and urbanization oriented to tourism and leisure. Ecologically critical marshes lie between the urbanizing coastal strip, the inner urban and suburban landscape of Merida, and the constellation of small traditional Mayan towns and agricultural lands around it occupying the mainland.

The city of Merida itself has experienced rapid urban growth, sprawl, in recent years. Merida is well known in Mexico and abroad as a city with high quality of life and living standard. Its stable economy, low crime and violence rates, and the cultural and environmental wealth of its region have made it attractive to relocating Mexicans and permanent or seasonal immigrants from other places. In particular, the United States and Canada. Real estate signage all over the large colonial/nineteenth century urban core is written in English. AirBnb's are in expansion, both in Merida and its nearby coastal strip.

But, as we know, all this development comes with a cost. The stress, pressure and impacts on the natural environment, the urban systems and infrastructure, and the local urban and rural societies of the Yucatan are palpable now.

This condition might be about to be exacerbated soon. The new Mexican federal administration has announced as its main infrastructural "mega-project" the construction of a tourist oriented train, the Maya Train<sup>1</sup>. This should happen within the 6 years the current presidential sexennial period. By 2024, the train will be ready, connecting cities, towns, archaeological sites, and beach resorts in the Mayan Peninsula.

This "mega-project" brings forward and accentuates the need to develop strategies to integrate the incoming additional tourism influx (the Yucatan Peninsula is already the second touristic destination in Mexico; the country is consistently one of the 10 most visited countries in the planet) with the rich cultural and historic heritage of the region while mitigating impacts, protecting communities and their culture, and regenerating the natural environment.

Of critical concern, derived from this mega-project, is the proven inability of the state, the government, to control predatory development in all its forms –gated communities, spatial ghettos, over-consumption or resources, disregard for the local and the poor and the weak- and its dire consequences –unchecked urbanization, deforestation, pollution, spatial segregation, exhaustion of resources, et al-. This is particularly worrisome today, as even the leftist government promoting the project has failed to take the time to adequately consult the matter with the local Mayan communities, the urban communities, all

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.tren-maya.mx/>

communities, except –presumably- the (economic) capital<sup>2</sup>. While ignoring, at least apparently to date, the legal requirement to develop full environmental impact studies to decide on the project and how it should be planned, designed, built and maintained. Simply put, there is just not enough information to date to gauge the project. This is an opportunity.

The time is ripe to explore how to ensure that the social, cultural and environmental wealth of the Yucatan is preserved and regenerated, while leveraging the potential economic benefits of the growing tourist industry and its support infrastructure.

The studio will look at how to address this situation and opportunity through socially, culturally, economically and environmentally sound infrastructural systems, public spaces, community engagement and development policies where this integration can be enjoyed in a process over time oriented set of strategies and tactics.

## The Territory and its Scales

This studio will define the project as established by the multiple urban and natural systems converging through a series of nested scales.

- First, if we think of the whole of the Yucatan Peninsula, a region, and its Mayan world as a “mega-project”, only matched by the scale of the Maya Train, then we will be enabled to understand the relevance of smaller scale operations which contribute to the unique character and value in question, under threat, but also an opportunity and asset.
- Second, through the territorial, as defined by the largest urban center of Merida, its hinterland, the constellations of small Mayan agricultural towns, and their area of influence stretching all the way to the coast with the Gulf of Mexico.
  - It is in this scale where the reach and implications of “mega-projects” takes more consequence. It is also this scale the one that requires research on global successes and failures with similar regions and territories facing the preventable (as will be embraced in the studio) conflict of the local (the cultural, the social) and the global (tourism and economic development).
- Third, the coastal strip stretching from Puerto Progreso to Telchac Puerto (but flexible enough to be reshaped as determined by a comprehensive analysis to be developed in studio). This coastal strip is composed of the following minimum components, from the coast-south: coastal waters, the beach, the urbanized strip, the marshes-lagoons, the transition to the deciduous forest and agricultural lands, and the immediate rural Mayan communities and towns.
- Fourth: The marshes-lagoons and their diverse perimeter, with variable width, including urban, rural, and natural areas.
- Fifth: Specific areas of particular intensity where the convergence of social, economic, and environmental issues is an opportunity to explore –through planning and design- a sustainable mode of development and environmental protection/regeneration.
  - At this point, before the extensive analysis to be performed in studio, there is an identified epicenter of interest defined by the transect cutting (from north to south) across the beach - urbanizing strip - salt ponds of Xtampu - the archaeological site of Xcambo<sup>3</sup> - and the forest/agricultural edge.

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<sup>2</sup> For an opinion on this matter by the instructor of the studio, please read:

<https://research.gsd.harvard.edu/mci/maya-train-and-isthmus-consultation-ga-with-gabriel-diaz-montemayor/>

<sup>3</sup> To get started on the Mayan Civilization imprint in the region please read the article: “MAYA COASTAL PRODUCTION, EXCHANGE, LIFESTYLE, AND POPULATION MOBILITY: A VIEW FROM THE PORT OF XCAMBO, YUCATAN, MEXICO” by Thelma Sierra Sosa, Andrea Cucina, T. Douglas Price, James H. Burton, and Vera Tiesler. LAR 696 / ARC 696 / ARC 561R Díaz Montemayor Spring 2019

- There will be other specific areas to be identified in studio. Including the transect cutting through, from north to south, Puerto Progreso, all the way to the forest/agricultural fringe.

Planning and design are present in all these scales. From strategies to reconcile communities with their vital space, their landscapes, to specific design opportunities for a sustainable architecture of the infrastructure necessary to integrate the local and the global.

### **Studio theories and methods**

This is a multi-disciplinary studio. Landscape Architecture, urban design, architecture and urban planning provide with a diverse repertoire of theories and methods that will be identified and employed. One premise of the studio is that there is a lot of architecture to be made part of infrastructure, and viceversa. As opposed to thinking of traditional infrastructural elements performing one function only, say a street, or an energy line, the studio will employ design, the architecture of infrastructure, to make of infrastructural systems more efficient, possibly minimizing their footprint on the ground, and polyvalent. All while addressing the local technological and cultural capacities (for example, considering the role of infrastructure construction as a way to provide temporary or permanent employment, and designing infrastructure with a capacity to be maintained and cared by local people.) More specifically, in the context of the main preoccupation of the studio, the social, economic, and environmental future of the Yucatan Coast, theories and methods within the realm of Landscape Urbanism and Ecological Planning come forward as primordial. Additionally, as a project that wants to base its proposals intersecting the local and the global, theories and methods of participatory urbanism, community engagement, tactical urbanism, and others, will be studied, selected, adapted and integrated to territorial scales and infrastructures. The studio will explore how to shift the equation from a capitalist mode of development to one that capitalizes on the social, cultural, and environmental wealth of the Yucatan and its peoples.

Initial project references within this theoretical realm include the speculative and critical practice work of Paola Viganò. In particular, the ideas synthesized in the book “Territories of Urbanism: The Project as a Knowledge Producer,” which, by the title itself, speaks on the ambitions of the work to be produced by the studio. Also relevant as an example is the work produced in speculative studios by Chris Reed at the GSD of Harvard, in example, the book “Retooling Metropolis: Working Landscapes, Emergent Urbanism.” In the context of Mexico, the speculative large scale planning of what would be “mega-projects” by architect Alberto Kalach and his firm “TAX” are a good example of the employment of the project as a tool to evidence opportunity bringing to the foreground the capacity of territorial scales to improve social and environmental conditions. In particular, the work included in the “Atlas de proyectos para la Ciudad de Mexico” (Project Atlas for Mexico City), that can be consulted here: <https://www.kalach.com/atlas/>

### **“Landing”<sup>4</sup> over the territory, an initial sequence**

When travelling to Puerto Progreso from Merida: Exiting Merida, driving northward on the highway, the car goes by entry gates to hidden-behind-the-forest high-income subdivisions, a few scattered industrial areas, and the archaeological site of Dzibilchaltun. There isn’t much more to see from the car, only the thicket of the low deciduous forest growing over a very flat plate with shallow soils and karstic geology. 15 miles later, just before getting to Puerto Progreso, a bridge spans over the marsh separating the mainland from the coastal strip. Puerto Progreso is a linear strip, 0.9 miles at its widest and of about 5 to 6 miles in length, occupying what were once salt dunes and marshes. While the blocks facing the beach are lined with a few hotels and many bars and restaurants, the rest of the town is a humble urban fabric composed of neighborhoods for a population economically reliant on the tourism and service industry. It is no longer the fishing village it once was, or the port town. 4 miles away from the beach in Puerto

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<sup>4</sup> In reference to Christophe Girot’s “Four Trace Concepts in Landscape Architecture.”  
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Progreso is the port of Progreso, connected by an equally long bridge. This port is critical for the economy of the region as it is a bulk material, container, and cruise port.

Moving along the coastal highway to the east, one encounters the back of Puerto Progreso's residential areas. Very unfortunately, exhibited in plain sight, are polluted and dirty ponds, in between the highway and the last row of houses. These ponds were once part of the rich ecology of the marshlands. This goes on for hundreds of meters until Puerto Progreso ends, and the next town comes in, Chicxulub Puerto. As the coastal strip of land narrows, urban form changes from impoverished housing blocks to coastal villas, condominium complexes, and open –vacant, with signs for sale- stretches of the strip. After Chicxulub, the pond strip between the highway and buildings disappears. In the next town, Uaymitun, the view to the gulf of Mexico from the highway is mostly blocked, with intermittent openings, by vacation and seasonal occupied buildings, many of which remain empty for significant times of the year. Taking care of these are the Mayan people of the coastal strip, hailing from Puerto Progreso, Chicxulub, Uaymitun, and the other coastal and inner-land nearby towns.

Most of this leisure oriented urbanization is owned by higher income people from Merida who flee Merida's hot summers to the beach, where a permanent breeze flows from the Gulf of Mexico every night, cooling off and bringing down temperatures. Also significant, are properties of immigrants, permanent or seasonal, from other countries, while there is a growing presence of properties geared toward outlets such as AirBnB.

Moving eastward along the coastal highway for 33 kilometers (20 miles) from its intersection between the north-south highway of Merida-Puerto Progreso, the car gets to the intersection with the highway south to Xcambo, and on to Dzemul and Motul de Carrillo Puerto. Once in this highway you get to the initially proposed (this is, before the studio's analysis) project's epicenter, existing in the salt harvesting ponds of Xtampu. These are located between the coast and the archaeological site of Xcambo, exactly 38 miles from downtown Merida. These salt production ponds, mines, have been in operation since before the arrival of Spaniards to the continent. Xcambo was once the urban center produced by the exploitation of salt in the lagoon. Today, the salt ponds support a small Mayan community who continue to harvest with traditional methods, but have minimal infrastructure and have the responsibility –emanating from an agreement and financial support from the federal government- to extract salt while protecting a natural habitat beautifully punctuated by flamingo flocks.

Xcambo had, at some point in history, a system of *sac be* (s), word for elevated road in Mayan, stretching from the lagoon and marsh into the forest and beyond, connecting with inland urban and rural settlements. But today, the southern edge of the marshes is defined by the forest. Beyond it, out of sight, are agricultural parcels within the forest. The closest towns are 7 miles beyond this edge.

### **A Parallel Studio:**

The studio will be partially coordinated with an Advanced Architecture Studio to be taught by Professor Coleman Coker. Both studios will travel together to the Yucatan but will work on their own projects. This studio will operate in the integration of scales, from the regional, to the territorial, to the site specific (for the demonstration of planning and design strategies); while Coker's studio will be site specific to the salt mining Mayan community of Xtampu.

Professors Coker and Diaz Montemayor visited the site during May of 2017. You can see and download photos from the site visit here:

- Photos of Xtampu, also known as Las Coloradas (The Redish) salt ponds: <https://flic.kr/s/aHsmmZhk7P>
- Photos of the nearby Mayan civilization archaeological site of Xcambo: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/gabodiazm/013m4m>

- Photos of Puerto Progreso: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/gabodiazm/A90J81>

## Travel:

Both coordinated studios will travel to and work together in the Yucatan during/around Spring Break, specific dates will soon be determined. UTSOA will provide travel support with a \$700 USD Mebane Fund scholarship per student. Each student will have to plan on an additional expense of up to \$600 USD, plus the meals.

The country of Mexico is in the list of restricted regions determined the University's International Oversight Committee<sup>5</sup>. As such, no student is required to travel to Mexico if he or she decides not to. However, Merida, its adjacent coast and the state of Yucatan are among the safest areas of Mexico, enjoying relatively low rates of crime and violence. Common sense precautions will be exercised as in any foreign location.

The US State Department in its travel advisory for the country of Mexico published on November 15, 2018, specifies on the state of Yucatan that:

### ***Yucatan state – Level 2: Exercise Increased Caution***

*Exercise increased caution due to crime.*

*There are no restrictions on travel for U.S. government employees in Yucatan state, which includes tourist areas in: Chichen Itza, Merida, Uxmal, and Valladolid.*

For a complete travel advisory follow this link:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories/mexico-travel-advisory.html>

## A Partner On Site:

We will work while over there with our local partners at the Marista University of Merida, one of the most prestigious private institutions of the region. The Marista has offered to support the travel experience with interaction with their MLA and architecture students. Including a potential workshop on traditional construction methods and techniques by renowned architect and designer Oscar Hagerman. There is also the chance to inform the work of the studio with ongoing thesis work being developed in Puerto Progreso by a group of students from the Master of Landscape Architecture Program at Marista University. We are exploring the possibility of hosting the Marista University group for a joint final review in early May 2019. More to come on this.

More specific information regarding travel will be handed to the student during studio sessions.

## **General learning objectives:**

- Learn from a unique project which requires multi-disciplinary and collaborative skills, bridging knowledge, methods, and matter, preparing the student for real life practice environments.
- To understand and explore the complexity of issues in Landscape Architecture, Urban Design, and Urban Planning, synthesizing and delivering appropriate responses in an accessible and concise manner.
- To understand, embrace, and explore in design the relationship of multiple scales in the assemblage of projects where a range of scales interrelate and are present throughout, from the regional to the construction detail.
- To continue to unfold design as a research process, and design as a process over time.

<sup>5</sup> <https://world.utexas.edu/risk/ioc>

### Specific learning objectives:

- To embrace design and planning as activities integral to environmental justice and equity, dealing with health, safety, welfare, accessibility, and diversity, in a complex location where local qualities are of significant importance and under significant threat.
- To research case studies, methods, and theories and explore ways to push these forward effectively influencing a design and planning project that, to a significant degree, lacks references, methods, and a practice framework.
- To engage in real issues and problems proper of the urban, rural, and territorial administration of cities and regions, asking larger questions of urbanism and the environment, converting these into analogies to be found elsewhere in the contemporary world, but, at the same time specific to the social, economic, political, and environmental factors of the Yucatan Peninsula and the Mayan Region.

### Work Phases and Evaluation:

Chronological order of phases and final grade composition:

Phase and Activity	Duration	Final Grade Value
<b>PHASE 1: INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS DEVELOPMENT + CASE STUDY RESEARCH</b>		
Research for a set of nested scales, from the region and mega-project, to the territory, and beyond		
	4.0 weeks	
Mega-Project / Mega-Problem / Mega-Stimuli		
Case Study Research (individual)		05%
Inventory (group)		10%
Analysis (group)		10%
<b>PHASE 2: CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT AT TERRITORIAL SCALE</b>		
(small groups or couples)	3.0 weeks	20%
<b>PHASE 3: SITE RECONNAISSANCE, TRANSITION FROM TERRITORIAL DESIGN TO SITE(s) DESIGN</b>		
(all studio)	2.0 weeks	10%
<b>PHASE 4: DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AT MULTIPLE NESTED SCALES</b>		
(Preferred: small groups, optional: individual work)	3.5 weeks	15%
<b>PHASE 5: FINAL PRODUCTION &amp; REVIEW</b>		
(Preferred: small groups, optional: individual work)	3.5 weeks	30%
<b>TOTAL</b>		
	16 Weeks	100%

Specific assignment descriptions for each phase and activity will be handed out in a timely manner.

Some activities are going to be executed individually by students, while others will be small group efforts.

It is important to mention that while many of the assignments will be group activities, students will still receive individual grades for their work in each of these teams. This means that grades within a group are not necessarily going to be all the same.

**Evaluation Criteria:**

The work will need to demonstrate the student's ability to analyze, test, iterate, and develop proposals with respect to scale, landscape systems, and formal and spatial resolution, whereby each reflects the criteria of grasp, process, and resolution as outlined in Landscape Architecture studio syllabi, but applicable to all other disciplines present in the studio:

1. Grasp: the work/project has clear conceptual idea that addresses the assignment's stated objectives;
2. Process: the work/project rigorously examines, tests, and refines conceptual intent and spatial implications through the effective and appropriate use of representation models;
3. Resolution: the work/project is complete conceptually, spatially, and technically, as demonstrated through verbal and graphic presentation.

**General Studio schedule:**

- This schedule may be modified by the instructor during the semester. You will be notified in advance of any changes to this tentative schedule. They may be changes in additional instructor absences due to research duties (conferences, lectures).
- Refer to the official University calendar for information regarding drop/add dates, payment schedules, and recognized holidays: <https://registrar.utexas.edu/calendars/18-19>

LAR 696 SPRING 2019 STUDIO SCHEDULE				
WEEK	DATE	DAY	ACTIVITY	NOTES / LOCATION
1	23-Jan	W	ADVANCED STUDIOS LOTTERY	NO STUDIO MEETING
	25-Jan	F	STUDIO INTRODUCTION	
2	28-Jan	M	INTRODUCTION TO PHASE 1: INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS DEVELOPMENT + CASE STUDY RESEARCH	2-3 pm MLA students Q & A meeting with Claire Agre from West 8 <a href="http://www.west8.com/">http://www.west8.com/</a>
				5 PM: CLAIRE AGRE FROM WEST 8 LECTURES @ Goldsmith 3.120 + LATIN AMERICAN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE BIENNIALS EXHIBITION SOFT OPENING @ Mebane Gallery
	30-Jan	W	PHASE 1: INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS DEVELOPMENT + CASE STUDY RESEARCH	3,30-4,30 pm: Meeting with Claudia Harari, Landscape Architect from Monterrey, Mexico <a href="http://www.hararilandscapemx/">http://www.hararilandscapemx/</a>
	01-Feb	F		5 PM: OPENING RECEPTION AND GALLERY TALK FOR THE LATIN AMERICAN LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE BIENNIALS EXHIBITION
3	04-Feb	M		INSTRUCTOR OUT OF TOWN DELIVERING LECTURES AT ARKANSAS
	06-Feb	W		
	08-Feb	F		
4	11-Feb	M		



	13-Feb	W	PHASE 1: PRESENTATION	5 pm Deborah Berke Lecture @ Jessen Auditorium		
	15-Feb	F	INTRODUCTION TO PHASE 2: CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT OF TERRITORIAL STRATEGIES			
5	18-Feb	M	PHASE 2: CONCEPTUAL DEVELOPMENT AT TERRITORIAL SCALE	5 pm Stih and Schnock Lecture at Goldsmith 3.120		
	20-Feb	W				
	22-Feb	F				
6	25-Feb	M		5 pm Joan Busquets Lecture at Goldsmith 3.120		
	27-Feb	W				
	01-Mar	F				
7	04-Mar	M		5 pm Michael Murphy Lecture @ Jessen Auditorium		
	06-Mar	W		INSTRUCTOR ATTENDING CELA CONFERENCE		
	08-Mar	F				
8	11-Mar	M	PHASE 2: MIDTERM REVIEW	5 pm ksestudio Lecture @ Goldsmith 3.120		
	13-Mar	W	Phase 3: Transition from territorial design to site(s) design	STUDIO SESSION FROM 1 TO 3 PM		
	15-Mar	F	TBD: MAY BE A DAY OFF TO PREPARE FOR THE TRIP, OR, WE MIGHT BE FLYING THIS DAY			
9	18-Mar	M	PHASE 3: Transition from territorial design to site(s) design / YUCATAN TRIP			
	20-Mar	W				
	22-Mar	F				
10	25-Mar	M	NO STUDIO, TRIP DECOMPRESSION			
	27-Mar	W	INTRODUCTION PHASE 4: DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AT MULTIPLE NESTED SCALES	5 pm William O'Brien Lecture @ Goldsmith 3.120		
	29-Mar	F	DESIGN DEVELOPMENT AT MULTIPLE NESTED SCALES			
11	01-Apr	M			INSTRUCTOR OUT OF TOWN	
	03-Apr	W			5 pm Elena Manfredini Lecture @ Goldsmith 3.120	
	05-Apr	F				
12	08-Apr	M			PHASE 4: PREFINAL REVIEW	
	10-Apr	W				
	12-Apr	F				
13	15-Apr	M				PHASE 5: FINAL PRODUCTION
	17-Apr	W				
	19-Apr	F				
14	22-Apr	M				

	24-Apr	W		
	26-Apr	F		
	29-Apr	M		
15	01-May	W		
	03-May	F		
	06-May	M		
16	08-May	W	FINAL PRODUCTION AND PRINTING - FINAL REVIEWS OF OTHER STUDIOS	INSTRUCTOR SERVING AS REVIEWER
	10-May	F	FINAL REVIEW	

### Grading Policy:

All assignments are graded and tabulated in a spreadsheet using a number scale which is then translated to a letter scale.

These scales correspond as follows:

A	94 to 100
A-	90 to 93
B+	87 to 89
B	84 to 86
B-	80 to 83
C+	77 to 79
C	74 to 76
C-	70 to 73
D	60 to 69
F	0 to 59

Final grades will be computed in accordance with University Academic Policies as follows:

### grade performance level

<b>A</b>	The assignment is complete at all levels, and is sound in its technical application and description.
<b>A-</b>	
<b>B+</b>	The assignment is thorough, with the potential to become superior with additional technical or graphic development.
<b>B</b>	The assignment resolves the stated intent, and accounts for the assignment's main concerns. Both process and resolution are complete, but contain minor deficiencies.
<b>B-</b>	
<b>C+</b>	The assignment is undertaken with the minimum effort required to resolve the stated issues; it lacks rigor, precision, and extended exploration. This grade must be offset with higher grades in support courses in order to maintain graduate standing.
<b>C</b>	The assignment is passing but contains deficiencies in regard to intent, development, and resolution. The project's conceptual framework is poorly

constructed, while graphic and verbal materials are fairly imprecise and incomplete. This grade must be offset with higher grades in support courses in order to maintain graduate standing.

C-

D The assignment is incomplete, and skills are not level appropriate. Technical comprehension and capability are not demonstrated.

D-

F The assignment is incomplete. Minimum objectives are not met. Performance is not acceptable. Note that this grade will also be assigned when you have excessive unexcused absences.

- Excused Incomplete grades (X) will only be assigned when the student is absent from class according to University approved criteria, and is unable to make up the work by the end of the term.
- Assignments are to be completed in the time allowed. With the exception of a medical, family or personal emergency, late work will be reduced by one letter grade per each 24 hour period after the stated assignment deadline.
- Any grade can be re-evaluated based on student concern. Subsequent evaluations can cause the grade to be reduced, remain unchanged, or increased. Grades can only be discussed on an individual basis, not as a comparison with other students' grades.

#### **Attendance Policy:**

- With the exception of an excused absence, attendance and participation in studio sessions are mandatory.
- Excused absences include family emergencies, personal emergencies, and illnesses. In the case of a family emergency an explanation will be required by the instructor. Family emergencies include a family member's illness, a death in the family, accidents, or any other health related issues in the family. In the case of a personal emergency an explanation will be required by the instructor. In the case of an illness, a doctor's notice explaining the absence will be required by the instructor. Attending, for example, weddings, graduations, or family trips are not family emergencies and therefore are not excused absences.
  - All of these situations should be communicated via email with the instructor.
- Acquiring more than 3 unexcused absences will result in the lowering of the final course grade by half a point. I.e. from 85 to 80 equal to B to B-.
- Acquiring more than 4 unexcused absences will result in the receipt of a failing grade for the course.
- Arriving late, after 20 minutes of the start of class, or leaving early, before 20 minutes the end of class, will be assessed as one half of an absence.
- The instructor might have to miss a few of the semester's studio sessions due to research activities. Students will be given advanced notice of this if it happens.
- The students are strongly encouraged to attend the lecture series organized by the School of Architecture every semester. These are included in the studio schedule. Studio sessions during those days are going to finish at 4,45 p.m. in order to give to the student to attend the lectures. Attendance to lectures from other design and planning disciplines is also strongly encouraged. There might be a small number of lectures which conflict with full (5 hour) sessions of the studio, such as reviews and travel, attendance to the lecture will be canceled in this situation.
- **Religious Holy Days:**
  - By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work 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:**

Plagiarism or violations of academic integrity in any form will be handled according to measures as outlined by the *General Information* catalog and the University.

Students are expected to abide to the Student Honor Code and the University Code of Conduct:

Student Honor Code:

*"As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity."*

University Code of Conduct:

*"The core values of The University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the university is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community."*

<http://www.utexas.edu/about-ut/mission-core-purpose-honor-code>

Students who violate University rules on academic integrity are subject to disciplinary action, including the receipt of a failing grade for the course, and possible dismissal from the University. Policies on academic integrity will be strictly enforced.

### **Accommodations:**

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, [512-471-6259](tel:512-471-6259), <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

Concerns may also be directed to the Program Director, Associate Professor Hope Hasbrouck.

**The following are recommendations regarding emergency evacuation from the Office of Campus Safety and Security, [512-471-5767](tel:512-471-5767), <http://www.utexas.edu/safety/> :**

1. Occupants of buildings on The University of Texas at Austin campus are required to evacuate buildings when a fire alarm is activated. Alarm activation or announcement requires exiting and assembling outside.
2. Familiarize yourself with all exit doors of each classroom and building you may occupy. Remember that the nearest exit door may not be the one you used when entering the building.
3. Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructor in writing during the first week of class.
4. In the event of an evacuation, follow the instruction of faculty or class instructors.
5. Do not re-enter a building unless given instructions by the following: Austin Fire Department, The University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.
6. Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): [512-232-5050](tel:512-232-5050)
7. Link to information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at: [www.utexas.edu/emergency](http://www.utexas.edu/emergency)

### **Communication between Students and Instructor outside of class hours:**

- Email will be used by the instructor to communicate with students when not in class time. Email should be used by students to ask for office hour appointments and/or any question, comment, or request outside of studio meeting times.
- Email is recognized as an official mode of university correspondence. Therefore, students are expected to check their email inbox often and on a daily basis. Class announcements, readings, assignment descriptions, and other information will be sent by the instructor to students via email.
- The studio will also have a UT Canvas site and will also use UT's BOX service to share data and assignments.

### **References:**

To be included in assignment descriptions and commented during lectures.