



Frank Lloyd Wright – Broadacre City

Dalhousie University - School of Architecture

ARCH 5004.06-2: URBAN SYSTEMS STUDIO DESIGNING A “COMMUNITY OF LIFE” IN THE CONTINUOUS CITY

Course Outline - Fall 2023

Classes:	Mondays and Thursdays, 2:00pm-5:30pm; Room B102, Central Seminar Room
Instructor:	Eric Stotts (eric.w.stotts@gmail.com) www.stottsarchitecture.com
Office hours:	By appointment
Teaching assistant:	N/A
Brightspace:	https://dal.brightspace.com/d2l/home/284704

ACADEMIC INFORMATION

Calendar Description

ARCH 5004 Urban Systems Studio
CREDIT HOURS: 6

This studio examines the infrastructure of the metropolis and its influence on urban form and development. Topics may include systems for transportation, energy use, water distribution, civic institutions, spaces of social exchange, and ecology. Students develop urban infrastructure propositions with reference to innovative urban projects worldwide.

FORMAT:	Studio
RESTRICTIONS:	Graduate students — Architecture
CO-REQUISITE:	ARCH 5215.03 — Appropriate Technology

Additional Course Description

"The city should be everywhere and nowhere."

-Frank Lloyd Wright, describing his concept for Broadacre City

"...the Pastoral ideal... is located in a middle ground somewhere 'between' yet in a transcendent relation to the opposing forces of civilization and nature."

-Leo Marx, The Machine in the Garden: Technology and the Pastoral Idea in America

"The city is made up of millions of assemblages that operate in a force field, ranging from the grown to the built... In the new force field the grown and the built must abandon their old binary struggle. The adverse relation between the wild and us hides the roots of the Anthropocene. The legacy of this struggle is still played out on the planet."

-Lars Lerup, The Continuous City

COURSE INTENT

This studio will focus on what architect and author Lars Lerup refers to as "The Continuous City." It will examine the development patterns which have come to define the contemporary North American city. No longer predicated on the orderly expansion of the existing urban grid, our cities have predominantly developed along spines - "ladders" - as architect, author and professor Albert Pope refers to them - connecting polycentric pockets of development which quite often border on natural areas. The ramifications for architecture have been a shift from the primacy of urban form to that of continuous urban space - a "Middle Landscape" - which mediates between the city and nature and often lacks a conspicuous organizational strategy - yet offers opportunity to reconnect with existing social, economic and ecological systems .

The specific site for this studio investigation is a 310-acre parcel of land currently owned by Akoma Holdings on the site of the former Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children (NSHCC.) Several existing buildings and programs currently serve the surrounding communities of Cherry Brook, North Preston, East Preston, and others.

By applying a holistic "systems thinking" approach and armed with a list of guiding principles, students will endeavor to identify and to understand the systems at work - social, economic and ecological - in order to design a true "Community of Life" for Akoma which serves their long-term vision and needs and addresses the twin crises of ecological collapse and lack of dignified attainable housing.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The overarching goal of the studio is three-fold: to design housing which responds to social, ecological and economic needs of a community and the city-at-large; to teach students how to select and apply a performance-based standard to an architectural project; and to apply a holistic, systems-thinking approach to their work.

RATIONALE FOR THE COURSE AND INTEGRATION WITH OTHER COURSES

Emphasis will be placed on the potential of prefabricated wood construction systems being studied concurrently in ARCH 5215 to provide the figurative and literal "framework" for the development of each student's housing strategy. Approaching this as a truly integrated studio allows students to fully explore their individual "frameworks" at various scales through the lens of "appropriate technology," utilizing the concepts and methods of Architecture and Systems Ecology.

CLASS FORMAT

Lectures, studios, seminars, tutorials, reviews, site visits

WEEKLY HOURS

For this 6-credit-hour course, an average of 12 hours per week is expected for all course-related activities, including classes. If most students are spending substantially more time, please notify the instructor.

SCHEDULE

M2 2023 TERM SCHEDULE

HOUSING STRATEGY + PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT	WEEK 1	MON 11 SEP	Class-wide M2 Studio Introductions
		THURS 14 SEP	ASSIGNMENT 1A: HOUSING MEMORY PECHA KUCHA (10%)
	WEEK 2	MON 18 SEP	Site Visit with Akoma Holdings property manager Ms. Veronica Marsman
		THURS 21 SEP	IN-PERSON PECHA KUCHA PRESENTATIONS DUE
	WEEK 3	MON 25 SEP	Lecture - Roundtable discussion of Individual Approaches to Housing
		THURS 28 SEP	Guest Speaker - LaMeia Reddick; founder of BLXCKHOUSE - Past, Present and Future of North Preston
	WEEK 4	MON 2 OCT	ASSIGNMENT 1B: HOUSING AND PROGRAM STRATEGY - Desk Crits
		THURS 5 OCT	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation - No Class
	WEEK 5	MON 9 OCT	IN-PERSON REVIEW OF ASSIGNMENT 1B (10%) - INTRO TO ASSIGNMENT 2
		THURS 12 OCT	Thanksgiving - No Class
SCHEMATIC DESIGN	WEEK 6	MON 16 OCT	Studio - Intro to Living Building Challenge and Living Community Challenge frameworks
		THURS 19 OCT	Studio - Structural Strategy, methods and materials
	WEEK 7	MON 23 OCT	Studio - Environmental Performance Strategy
		THURS 26 OCT	Desk Crits
	WEEK 8	MON 30 OCT	IN-PERSON REVIEW OF ASSIGNMENT 2 (30%) - INTRO TO ASSIGNMENT 3
		THURS 2 NOV	Studio - Site Strategy Precedent Study - Broadacre City and La Villette - collection of existing site information and assets
MASTERPLAN	WEEK 9	MON 6 NOV	Studio - Site Systems Identification Exercise
		THURS 9 NOV	Studio - Masterplanning Workshop - with LaMeia Reddick (TBC)
	WEEK 10	13-17 NOV	IN-PERSON REVIEW OF ASSIGNMENT 3 - MASTERPLAN (20%) Guest Reviewer LaMeia Reddick
DESIGN DEVELOPMENT + VISION DOCUMENT	WEEK 11	MON 20 NOV	READING WEEK
		THURS 23 NOV	Studio - INTRO TO ASSIGNMENT 4 - 4a) Responding to Living Community Challenge and 4b) Vision Document Format
	WEEK 12	MON 27 NOV	Studio - Desk Crits
		THURS 30 NOV	Studio - Desk Crits
	WEEK 13	MON 4 DEC	Project Evaluation
		THURS 7 DEC	Studio - Desk Crits
	WEEK 14	13-14 DEC	Studio - Desk Crits
		FRI 15 DEC (TBC)	FINAL REVIEW (30%)
			Presentation of Vision Document to Akoma Holdings (TBC)

ASSIGNMENTS

1. HOUSING STRATEGY+PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT | 4 WEEKS | 20%

Students will begin by preparing and presenting individual Pecha-Kucha presentations (20 slides, 20 seconds per slide) on a particular "housing memory" from their past experience which will help guide their approach to a housing strategy moving forward.

We will also visit Akoma and meet with property manager Veronica Marsman to discuss the past, present and future of Akoma and to identify specific programmatic needs — and opportunities.

2. SCHEMATIC DESIGN | 3 WEEKS | 30%

Students will be working individually to develop a schematic design for specific housing strategies which meaningfully integrate with existing — and desired - community needs and programs. To guide their work, students will be referencing the core

precepts of the Living Building Challenge and the Living Communities Challenge, two performance-based standards authored by the International Living Future Institute [<https://living-future.org/>] whose stated mission is “a society that is socially just, culturally rich, and ecologically restorative.”

3. MASTERPLAN | 2 WEEKS | 20%

Students will collectively participate in a site-level systems identification exercise and master-planning workshop, during which the students’ individual strategies will be organized on site to maximize the potential programmatic and ecological synergies and interrelationships – in the spirit of Frank Lloyd Wright’s Broadacre City. LaMeia Reddick may participate in this exercise, pending her availability

4. DESIGN DEVELOPMENT + AKOMA VISION DOCUMENT | 3 WEEKS | 30%

4a) Design Development:

Students will respond to the important takeaways from the master-planning exercise and further develop their individual designs, demonstrating how their individual projects satisfy the performance goals of the Living Community Challenge.

4b) Akoma Vision Document:

Students will be required to format their final presentation to be easily compiled into a Vision Document which will be submitted to Akoma Holdings at the end of the term for their inspiration, review and use moving forward.

Student Learning Experience Questionnaires (SLEQ) will be scheduled during class time in the last two weeks.

CONSULTANTS / ADVISORS

Ms. Veronica Marsman – Property Manager – Akoma Holdings Inc.

Ms. LaMeia Reddick – founder, BLXCKHOUSE

TRAVEL

For any off-campus travel, indicate that the student must download the Faculty’s travel form from tinyurl.com/dal-travel-form, fill it in, and submit it to Ken Rice in the Faculty office before leaving.

ASSESSMENT

ATTENDANCE AND DEADLINES

To do well in this course, you need to: keep up with the assignments, be an effective collaborator with classmates when required, be available for desk crits during scheduled course times, and participate in pin-ups and reviews. It is also a good idea to do your design work in studio, so that you may learn from your classmates and allow them to learn from you. If you are ill, please do not come to studio! Instead, download a Student Declaration of Absence from Brightspace and email it to the instructor. Information regarding SDAs, illnesses and accommodations can be found below.

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Letter	Percent	Definition	Description
A+	90–100%	Excellent	Considerable evidence of original thinking; outstanding capacity to analyze and synthesize; outstanding grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.
A	85–89%		
A–	80–84%		
B+	77–79%	Good	Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature.
B	73–76%		
B–	70–72%		
C+	65–69%	Satisfactory	Evidence of some understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems.
C	60–64%		
C–	55–59%		
D	50–54%	Marginal pass	Evidence of minimal familiarity with the subject matter; minimal analytical and critical skill.
F	0–49%	Fail	Little evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in analytical and critical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.
INC		Incomplete	(counts as zero in GPA calculation)
W		Withdrew after deadline	(neutral in GPA calculation)
ILL		Compassionate reasons, illness	(neutral in GPA calculation)

In a graduate course, a final grade below B– will be recorded as an F.

FORMAT OF FEEDBACK TO STUDENTS

Students will receive written feedback on their design work within one week of each pin-up. This will take the form of a numerical evaluation according to the rubric, and written comments as appropriate. These will be uploaded to Brightspace.

DUE DATES AND LATE SUBMISSIONS

Because architectural design is a constantly iterative process — involving research, analysis, creation, evaluation and revision — one can rarely say that a design project is “done”. This often means that designers work on and on to refine a project or its visual presentation. In the context of a 13-week school term, it is not possible to reach a high degree of refinement. Instead, we need to learn to communicate effectively using the least amount of effort. It’s a good idea to develop your design project through sketching, so you can rely on these at pin-ups. If you cannot make a pin-up due to illness, I will arrange a later review. If you miss a pin-up for any other reason, you may hand-in the work for assessment, subject to a late penalty.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCOMMODATION PLANS

Students requiring learning accommodations are asked to contact Dalhousie’s Student Accessibility Services (access@dal.ca) at the beginning of the term. This office will work with the student to develop an accommodation plan; they will also inform the instructor regarding the relevant details (extended deadlines, etc.).

STUDENT DECLARATION OF ABSENCE

The Student Declaration of Absence (SDA) is normally used when you cannot complete a class or coursework due to illness or an unexpected emergency, without having to obtain a doctor's note. Because assignments in this graduate studio are presented and reviewed in a group setting, SDAs are not accepted for the pin-ups. Late hand-ins will be subject to a 3% penalty per weekday, including reading week.

MEDICAL CONDITIONS AND EMERGENCIES

In the event of a health emergency, please submit a medical note as soon as possible to the Architecture office. This will allow you to complete the work without being subject to late penalties — the extension depends on how long you were unable to work, as indicated in the medical note. If more than one course is affected, please consult with the Graduate Coordinator to set a new schedule of due dates.

FACULTY POLICY

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The Faculty of Architecture and Planning is committed to recognizing and addressing racism, sexism, xenophobia and other forms of oppression within academia and the professions of architecture and planning. We, the faculty, are working to address issues of historic normalization of oppressive politics, segregation, and community disempowerment, which continues within our disciplines today.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Academic Regulations

This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the University Calendar and the Senate. See the School's "[Academic Regulations](#)" page for links to university policies and resources:

- Academic integrity
- Accessibility
- Code of student conduct
- Dalhousie University Library
- Dalhousie Writing Centre <http://writingcentre.dal.ca>
- Diversity and inclusion; culture of respect
- Fair dealing guidelines (copyright)
- Recognition of Mi'kmaq territory
- Student declaration of absence
- Work safety

Academic Integrity

All work is expected to meet the [Dalhousie University standards of Academic Integrity](#) especially regarding citation and plagiarism. Plagiarism (using the original creative work of another without full and proper acknowledgement) constitutes grounds for failure of an assignment, and may result in disciplinary actions by the university. The work must be your own and cannot be subcontracted. If there is a third party involved other than colleagues, faculty, or a University workshop, similar penalties will be enforced.

Accessibility

The Student Accessibility Centre is Dalhousie's center of expertise for student accessibility and accommodation. The advising team works with students who request accommodation as a result of: a disability, religious obligation, or any barrier related to any other characteristic

protected under Human Rights legislation (NS, NB, PEI, NFDL). Read more: https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html

Student Code of Conduct

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner — perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution. Read more:

https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/student-life-policies/code-of-student-conduct.html

Diversity and Inclusion — Culture of Respect

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2). Read more: <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>

Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Visit the office in the McCain Building (room 3037) or contact the programs at elders@dal.ca or 902-494-6803 (leave a message).

READINGS

<Refer to In-Studio Shared-Use Library and Studio OneDrive>

Eric Stotts

27 Sept 2023