

THE SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS**Version June 4th, 2014**

Synopsis: This architecture design studio will envision a hypothetical meta-architectural design school as a 'school of schools' – a hotel-like armature and/or institution that hosts a variety of national and international architecture schools in New York City, possibly on a rotating basis. Students will propose new physical formats for working and learning environments that extrapolate on current changes occurring in architectural education in which new connections are being made across academic, disciplinary and geographical boundaries. The School of Schools will be engaging, inclusive, porous, interconnected, and optimistic. Students will work either individually or in pairs to propose a new programmatic concept and design for a new medium sized building on a dense site in Manhattan. The studio will emphasize a variety of skills and means of representation, including conceptual thinking and diagramming, formal invention, digital media, and physical models.

Preamble: Globalization of Architectural Education

1868... 1873... 1881... 1895... 1911... 1937... 1938... 1953... 1980... 1988... 2008: the story of architectural education in the United States is one of successive waves of globalization, or at least of pedagogical influence across national borders. The first five of these dates (1868-1911) signal the introduction of seminal French and to a lesser extent German ideas, through the teachings and influence of deans of the schools of MIT, University of Illinois, Columbia and the GSD. Names such as Ware, Schermerhorn, Hudnut, Ricker, Warren, and Duquesne now linger as ghosts, reminding us through the rooms and buildings after which they are named of their influence as Deans and founders of schools. But their influence was, with some exceptions for those in search of a more home-grown national identity, such as Ricker in Illinois, largely imported.

Until just before the arrival of Walter Gropius to Harvard's GSD in 1936, much of architectural education was modeled on the teachings of the Ecole de Beaux Arts in France, where students learned largely through copying neo-classical styles. The next wave came from Germany. Along with Gropius, a variety of other former Bauhaus faculty, including Marcel Breuer, Moholy-Nagy, and Mies Van der Rohe, emigrated to the US just before the Second World War, transforming architectural education in a country already receptive to architectural modernism. The importing of architectural influence from Europe continued with such figures as Josep Lluís Sert's arrival as Dean of the GSD in 1953, and of Bernard Tschumi at GSAPP in 1988, to name a few.

The last date in our list – 2008, the founding under Dean Mark Wigley of GSAPP's global network Studio-X – heralds a more complex flow of information and influence across national boundaries. Alongside the more straightforward foreign outposts/exports of major universities in places such as the Middle East (eg US schools in Qatar), and imports (eg Technion in NYC), architecture schools across the world regularly visit New York City, seeing in it an urban laboratory. And as with some of you, an increasing number of architecture students are traveling across borders to complete your education.

Corollary of Globalization: Social, Disciplinary and Academic boundaries.

Our studio begins at this moment of complex and multi nodal trans-national interconnections. However, it also begins with a parallel story closer to home. As perhaps a corollary of globalization, architecture schools since at least the Great Depression began turning their attention to their immediate surroundings, considering the potential social impact of architectural education. In the last few decades, initiatives such as the Yale Building Project (1967), the Rural Studio at Auburn University in Alabama (1993), and various Design-Build programs at a variety of schools, have engaged with their communities through student-led building projects.

These seemingly opposite tendencies of architectural education – towards the global and the immediately adjacent – could be broadly understood as part of a larger set of changes that are extending architectural education beyond the confines of schools of architecture. These include an increasing heterogeneity and specialization of the profession, and an expansion of the discipline to connect to new fields, resulting in new labs, programs, and the incorporation of other disciplines within architecture schools, or collaborations with other departments. In addition, changes in means of production are placing schools at the forefront of some technologies, generating an interest from and new partnerships with other fields and industry. As a result, schools of architecture are reaching more and more beyond their academic boundaries: across disciplines, to local communities and to industry, and geographically in ways unimaginable when the first architecture schools in the United States looked across the Atlantic Ocean at France.

Design Problem: A School of Schools.

So why then, do we still study and teach architecture in spaces that resemble Beaux-Arts ateliers? This model may be effective from a pedagogical and social perspective, but are there other models more appropriate for a school with wider connections beyond academic boundaries? While spatial and typological questions about the design of schools are not necessarily new, the transformation of working and learning environments in the context of the maker revolution, the shared economy, and new technologies is assuming new urgency.

As a vibrant urban laboratory, New York City is often visited by schools of architecture from other cities and countries. Many of the visiting schools maintain affiliations with New York City based schools of architecture, as well as with a variety of institutions and private practice. This studio proposes a dedicated building that provides spaces and amenities for visiting architecture schools, and for interactions between them, with and entities beyond the building's boundaries.

This studio will propose a **school of schools** – or a hotel of schools – acting as a host institution. Students will propose a scenario in which a selection of national and/or international schools of architecture – perhaps on a rotating basis – will share spaces and services for limited time periods. As with a proliferation of co-working spaces, visiting schools might rent studios, crit rooms, labs, lecture rooms, auditoria, support and office space on a per semester basis, or maintain a more permanent presence. The studio will imagine that the school of schools will

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maintain academic links to a variety of New York City schools of architecture, including GSAPP, providing visiting students with an expanded set of academic resources that include libraries.

Within this framework, students will propose new ways in which schools can interact with each other, and with entities beyond the building, including local communities and industry. While maintaining the education of architects as a primary goal, could a school operate as a town square or theater, engaging a wider public? Or could it function as a market or a factory, inserting academia within wider economic and industrial frameworks. Sited in an urban site, the School of Schools will have greater opportunities to engage with the city at large, reminding one of the civic and social functions of hotels in another age.

From Fundamentals to Systems, and Formal Invention

Beyond a merely programmatic exploration of a potentially renewed type, the studio will foreground design exploration through a specific focus of fundamental architectural elements and their capacity to be developed into broader organizational systems. These elements – whether desk, stair, column, crit surface, window, door, skylight, etc - will be chosen by students for their capacity to sponsor interaction and produce new spatial and formal organizational possibilities. This focus on simple elements assuming complex roles continues a topic explored in nARCHITECTS' teaching and practice over the last 14 years, while acquiring new depth with this year's Venice Biennale, curated by Rem Koolhaas, and focusing on fundamentals. Students will therefore have an opportunity to become familiar with this timely resource, while drawing from their own experiences as students of architecture.

Studio Organization

Students will initially work in pairs for the first week or two and can choose to remain in pairs or work individually. Students will be expected to research, read selected readings, develop clear concepts and strong diagrams, use digital media, build physical or 3d print / laser cut models in series, and develop conceptually innovative designs for radical buildings. Either Eric Bunge or Mimi Hoang will generally be in studio on Mondays and Wednesdays, with scheduled overlaps for internal pinups and reviews. A Teaching Assistant will be in studio on Fridays and other days overlapping with Eric or Mimi, once to twice a week.

NOTE: We will have two finals. The first is the design final with an invited jury on July 30th. The second, on August 7th, is a submission of a Prospectus for your School of Schools, which will address some of the comments from the design final review jury by re-formulating or adding a key concept diagram(s).

Students selected for this studio should come to class on June 11 with your portfolio (for us to understand your educational background), and graphic information about your previous architecture school (for the first research exercise).

THE SCHOOL OF SCHOOLS: STUDIO SCHEDULE**Week 1 6/9 RESEARCH: Architecture schools**

- a) Your own undergraduate architecture school.
- b) A precedent architecture school *building*
 - FAU, Villanova Artigas, Sao Paulo
 - Yale, Paul Rudolph, New Haven
 - Cornell, OMA, NY
 - U of T, Office d'A, Toronto
 - Others tbd
- c) A historical architectural education *program*
 - GSAPP
 - GSD
 - Bauhaus
 - Vkuhetmas
 - Beaux Arts
 - Rural Studio
 - Yale Building Workshop
 - Parsons Design Workshop

In pairs of 2, choose two out of three schools to research from above. Analyze and diagram (ie. re-draw in your own graphics):

- a), b), c): Degree programs structure & organization: departments, disciplines, research labs, number of students per department or degree program.
- b, c): General building size and relation to site.
- b, c): Building areas and organization: classrooms, labs, workshops, auditoria / lecture halls; administration; support spaces.
- b, c): Architectural element / armature that is essential to shaping the educational environment and modes of interacting (skylight, ramp, stair, balcony, desk, pin-up board, facade).

These analytical drawings will follow a studio graphic template, with the goal of uniting visual representation across a diverse range of precedents. It is essential that all graphics are redrawn – no copying/pasting of research materials.

Pin-up: Mon. 6/16

Deliverables: PPT/PDF presentation comprised of 11x17 sheet layouts. Each sheet should clearly identify a theme or aspect of the precedent.

Week 2: 6/16 CONCEPT DIAGRAMS: Alternate modes of work and interaction

If architectural schools have, through their curriculum and programming, been increasingly expanding beyond their academic boundaries, forging relationships with digital, technological and/or manufacturing industries, professional practice, communities and public agencies, the School of Schools amplifies this further. As a collective of multiple schools and programs with varying occupancy and timeframes, it resists a singular organizational model. In Week 2, you will explore program types other than “school” to uncover innovative

alternate modes of education. If an architectural school, in abstract, essentially consists of spaces for work and interaction, how would these environments radically change if you reimagined school as: Hotel? Office? Market? Factory? Theater? Zoo? How would they shape the school's mission and identity? These alternate models of exchange and interaction will serve as analogies for expanding the pedagogical boundaries of the architecture school. Fitting roughly within the building envelope given for your site, 3d model **spatial concepts** for your "School as...?". Conceptually spatialize flow of students and visitors (in/out of building and within building); inter-relationships between different schools or programs; visual / physical / digital connections. Consider highlighting an architectural element, in the spirit of the first week's research.

Pin-up: Mon. 6/23

Deliverables: PPT/PDF presentation comprised of 11x17 sheet layouts. This is the beginning of the school prospectus that you will deliver at the end of the semester. Each sheet should clearly and graphically illustrate (keep text to a minimum) an aspect of your School of Schools.

Week 3: 6/23 CONCEPT MODELS + PLANS

Continue development of your spatial concepts from the previous week, through intensive physical models (in multiples) and with specific site strategies. As a studio, you will build one 1/32" shared site model – into which your own model should fit. See detailed description of models under Deliverables for Week 4.

Week 4: 6/30 CONCEPT MODELS + PLANS**Pin-up: Wed. 7/2**

Deliverables: 1/32" physical models – in multiples / series. Each model should consist of one material and building technique only. Examples include: a) laser cut plexi or card sheets as horizontal or vertical contours; b) solid foam or 3d printed massing model; c) solid foam or 3d printed model of voids only; d) plexi or card model of floor plates and circulation connectors only, etc.

Week 5: 7/7 MID-TERM REVIEW: Mon. 7/7 or Wed. 7/9

Deliverables:

- 1/32" Physical concept models
- Concept diagrams – at the scale of the city or neighborhood, building
- 1/32" 2d drawings

Week 6: 7/14 Element / Armature for Work & Interaction**Week 7: 7/21 Design development & Representation.****Week 8: 7/28 DESIGN FINAL REVIEW: Wed. 7/30****Week 9: 8/4 PROSPECTUS BOOK DESIGN SUBMISSION: Thur. 8/7**