Gumbo ya-ya is a creole term that means “everybody talks at once” . . . [It] is the essence of the black musical tradition where “the various voices in a piece of music may go their own ways but still be held together by their relationship to each other.”


Overview

In a 2017 report, NCARB President Kristine A. Harding explained that “while several groups remain underrepresented within the profession, these trends point to growing diversity among licensure candidates, and eventually, future architects.” Yet progress inches forward at a painfully slow pace, with women now making up just 19 percent of all licensed architects and African Americans being stuck at less than 2 percent (or 37 and 17 percent of what they should be respectively).

In 2006, AIA commissioned a huge, but never released, study of 11,500 individuals at all levels of the profession—practicing architects, architecture educators, interns, students, non-licensed design professionals. It revealed damming reasons for architecture’s failure to become more diverse: a white macho culture, negative educational experiences, discriminatory employment practices, a glass-ceiling, social isolation of underrepresented individuals, and—notably—attrition even after investing years in licensure.

This seminar posits that the persistent whiteness and maleness of architecture is due to its Eurocentric, patriarchal norms of practice. Further, it posits that the field must adopt more just and inclusive norms if it is to reach its goal of creating better futures for the country and world. The seminar challenges you to move the field in new directions by re-imagining practice norms that can embrace and serve an ever more diverse and divided society. In short, it engages you as creative thinkers in an experiment in professional transformation.
Methodology

This hands-on seminar offers two phases of collaborative learning-by-doing. It will illustrate gumbo ya-ya by involving you as an active participant in a polyrhythmic, nonlinear assembly of individual and collective talent.

The phases are as follows:

1. Cultural Studio Space. You will adopt Afrocentric and feminist habits of mind as a basis for designing an ideal studio space.

2. Practice Space. After considering prevailing practices in architecture, you will plan and develop an equitable and inclusive practice space.

Both phases will require reading, hands-on work, structured reflection, and documentation. You will work with your peers to develop specific requirements for the outcomes of each phase and will also be engaged in evaluating those outcomes.

Learning Objectives

You will be able to:

– Use the creative processes inherent in several African American art forms to imagine inclusive city-making practices.

– Use the social process theorized in Afrocentric literature and feminist research to imagine egalitarian relationships.

– Envision a practice approach that can embrace and serve an ever more diverse and divided society.

Required Texts and Materials

Numerous articles (see Required Readings in individual assignments), to be posted on Canvas.


Model making materials.
**Typical Course Agenda**

- Discuss Readings: 30–45 Minutes
- Present Assignment: 30–45 Minutes
- Reflect on Process/Outcomes: 15 Minutes
- Plan New Assignment: 30 Minutes

**Policies and Assignments**

This seminar is about collaboration and thus requires your attendance and active participation in all class sessions. If you are not present, you will compromise the progress of your team mates and the seminar as a whole.

The seminar has three assignments: a three-dimensional model, a final project to be determined by students, and weekly reflections. Only the reflections assignment will be completed and evaluated individually; the model and the final project will be completed and evaluated in teams. The assignments are as follows:

1. **Cultural Studio Space**
   - Three-dimensional model with individual and team work
   - Assignment refined by student consensus
   - Informed by readings in African American culture and feminism
   - Five weeks • Evaluation by students and instructor
   - 40 Percent

2. **Practice Space**
   - Assignment scope and format developed by student consensus
   - Informed by readings in design management, diversity, and public interest design
   - Also informed by guest practitioner presentations and their feedback
   - Five weeks • Evaluation by students and instructor
   - 40 Percent

3. **Reflections**
   - Individual written reflections beginning Week Five
   - Individual self and peer evaluations of the two assignments
   - Ten weeks • Evaluation by instructor
   - 20 Percent
Schedule Revised 01.22.2018

Reading assignments subject to change as students suggest readings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Seminar Activity</th>
<th>Deliverable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>29 Jan</td>
<td>1. Cultural Studio Space</td>
<td>Discuss Angelou Reading, Hughes Reading Assign Quilting Readings, Baldwin Reading</td>
<td>Reading Reflections</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>05 Feb</td>
<td>1. Cultural Studio Space</td>
<td>Discuss Quilting Readings, Baldwin Reading Assign Dance Readings; Plan Solo Studio Space</td>
<td>Reading Reflections</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>12 Feb</td>
<td>1. Cultural Studio Space</td>
<td>Discuss Dance Readings; Review Solo Studio Space Assign Afrocentric Readings; Plan Shared Studio Space</td>
<td>Solo Space; Documentation Reflections [Midterm]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>19 Feb</td>
<td>1. Cultural Studio Space</td>
<td>Discuss Afrocentric Readings; Review Shared Studio Space Assign Feminism Readings; Plan GY-Y Space</td>
<td>Shared Space Documentation; Reflections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>26 Feb</td>
<td>1. Cultural Studio Space</td>
<td>Discuss Feminism Readings; Assign Management Reading Review Gumbo Ya-Ya Space; Discuss Lessons Learned</td>
<td>Gumbo Ya-Ya Space Documentation; Reflections</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>05 Mar</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Kinney Trip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>12 Mar</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>19 Mar</td>
<td>2. Practice Space</td>
<td>Discuss Design Management Reading Brainstorm Final Project; Assign Public Interest Reading</td>
<td>Reflections</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>26 Mar</td>
<td>2. Practice Space</td>
<td>Discuss Public Interest Reading Begin Working on Final Project</td>
<td>Reflections</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>02 Apr</td>
<td></td>
<td>Presentations by Guest Practitioners Discuss In-progress Final Project with Guest Practitioners</td>
<td>Reflections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>09 Apr</td>
<td></td>
<td>Presentations by Guest Practitioners Discuss In-progress Final Project with Guest Practitioners</td>
<td>Reflections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>16 Apr</td>
<td></td>
<td>REVIEW of Final Project at 95 Percent</td>
<td>Final Project; Reflections DUE 20 Apr</td>
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</table>

Required Readings

Please see individual assignments.