Course Description

This seminar outlines changes in the discourse and practice of architecture responding to crisis and uncertainty as an opportunity for new potentials, exploring social, political, and economic contexts and their influences on visionary architecture and urbanism. The last tumultuous decade was compounded by disrupted economies, contested political grounds, and realizations in climate change. These crises and turmoil upended traditional notions of the typical processes of architecture and question top-down and bottom-up hierarchies, public and shared realms, and other norms. The course will study the current practices of the architecture of crisis and disruption as well as the historical significance of previous post traumatic yet productive periods from the post-war periods in the U.S., the nadir in New York in the late 70s, and other seminal moments that projected and shaped the modern environment.
Examining a selection of initiatives and their geographies, the course will also investigate architecture in the current context of shifting demographics and social conventions, privatized collectivity, rising migrant populations, and heightened ecological and environmental concerns. The seminar will be comprised of lectures, readings, discussions, as well as a final project intervening in the existing context of selected cities which will be reviewed with outside critics and will culminate in a final booklet. Guest lecturers include Sean Anderson, associate curator at the Museum of Modern Art speaking on his exhibition Insecurities: Tracing Displacement and Shelter, and Lydia Kalipoliti speaking on the topic of Closed Worlds and the 2016 exhibit and conference of the same name that explored the genealogy of closed resources and prototypes of the last century, among others.

Course Requirements

Class Discussion and Participation
Each week will begin with a presentation by the instructor followed by a discussion on the readings distributed across the seminar students from a weekly selection. Students will be evaluated in part on their level of participation in the discussion.

Student Work Updates
At end of each class, several students will do a presentation of the progress of their final projects which will become the basis for a discussion. There will be periodic workshops when the class will discuss their projects as a whole.

Final Project
As the final project, each student will submit a research project as a case study using the context of a specific city and timeframe. Students will submit a paper topic and bibliography well in advance of the final submission (schedule t.b.d.). The subject of the project will be decided in consultation with the instructor and the final format will be a booklet which includes a design component and a 2,000 word essay. Evaluations for the final assignment will favor a concise, focused, well structured, and compelling project that supports a convincing thesis.

Course Schedule (tent. as of 1/10/18)

Week 1 (1/16)  Introduction : The Speculative City

Week 2 (1/23)  Post-Bubble Economies and Changing Demographics

Readings Selected From:
Week 3  (1/30)  Post War: Architecture, Urbanism, and Culture

Readings Selected From:

Week 4  (2/6)  Workshop / Readings Discussion (Vacancies and Voids)

Readings Selected From:

Recommended Reading:


Readings Selected From:

Week 6  (2/20)  Over-speculation: Foreclosed, Big boxed, and Mismatched

Readings Selected From:

Week 7  (2/27)  Workshop / Readings Discussion (Politics of Scarcity)

Readings Selected From:


Week 8  (3/6)  **New York Nadir**

**Readings Selected From:**

**Final Project Topic and Bibliography Due T.B.D.**

Week 9  (3/13)  **Spring Break (no class)**

Week 10  (3/20)  **Alternatives in Production**

**Reading Selected From:**

Week 11  (3/27)  **Revolution and the Russian Avant Garde**

**Readings Selected From:**

**Recommended Reading:**
**Week 12 (4/3)**  
**Workshop / Readings Discussion (Resilience)**

**Reading Selected From:**

**Recommended Reading:**

**Week 13 (4/10)**  
**L.A. Nadir**

**Readings Selected From:**

**Recommended Readings:**

**Week 14 (4/17)**  
**Final Workshop with Outside Critics / Closing Discussion**

"**FINAL PROJECT DUE DATE May 3rd (tent.)"**