



CARC 301-551 ITALY- Santa Chiara

Instructor: Logan Wagner, PhD . AIA . NCARB

Spring 2010

Location : Williams 008F

Phone : 979 862 6848, 512 801 9819

Email : ewagner@tamu.edu, alarife@aol.com

Office hours : M : after 5 / T : 2-5 / W : before 2 (By appointment)

TA : Chamila T. Subasinge, RIBA, chamila_sad@tamu.edu, 979 862

9135

Course Description: Field studies in design Innovation. Credit 6 hrs. Design innovation in international and domestic environments away from Texas A & M University campus; emphasis on the cultural, social, economic, geographical, climatic and technological factors influencing design solutions for human needs.

Studio course based on the premise of sustainability with a strong main focus of using local, regional natural building materials; vernacular building techniques and the development of architectural crafts.

Objectives

The primary objective is an understanding on holistic use of natural building materials and reintroduction of vernacular construction techniques; the intention is to establish higher degree of environmental awareness in terms of sustainability in contemporary design-built arena; this is to be accomplished through dual tasks: **Design** and **construction** tasks.

Another important component for this studio is hands-on natural materials use and testing. This will be taught in the town of Castiglione Fiorentino, Italy.

1. Design Task

The design studio is based on the idea of reducing the carbon footprint generated by adding to the built environment. We minimize this environmental impact by utilizing natural building materials and exploring ancient building techniques that are applicable to modern contemporary situations. By employing state of the art sustainable technologies and hardware that provide us

with infrastructure necessary to live with indispensable appliances are characteristic of modern times.

For this semester, we have a once in a lifetime opportunity to work on creating architecture for a modern settlement that reaches as far back in time as 500 bc. Most of the existing architecture in town harks back to the Renaissance of the 14th and 15th Centuries AD.

As a continuation of research performed in Mesoamerica students will help document the open spaces of Castiglione. Students are required to document the architecture of a particular section of Castiglione and make a model of that urban section that will continue the model started by the previous studio Santa Chiara in the Fall 2009. Within the urban area to be recorded an architectural project and program will be announced at Santa Chiara. The research required is multifaceted and includes but not limited to:

1. Identification, harvesting, treating and utilizing of natural building materials of region where the project will be built.
2. Interviewing the end users of the project, identify their needs and through surveys and questionnaires to develop an architectural program.
3. Understand the cultural and historical aspects of the social group the building will

1.1. Field Trips

Several field trips are planned in the town as well as to neighboring villages. The Architectural and Art History tours to villages and major cities will be planned and conducted by the director of the Santa Chiara program, Prof. Paolo Barrucherri. The site visit days are Wednesdays.

1.2 Design log

Students are required to use a design log to develop hand-drawing skills, take notes and ultimately track the mental process design evolution of each individual project. Your sketchbook will be graded for completeness and quality and is a significant component of the final grade.

Both in and out class sessions with the help of guest lectures will be conducted to keep this skill active throughout the semester.

2. Construction task

In addition to their designs students are expected to experiment, test and use natural and recyclable building materials, in particular, materials in the vicinity of the project. Students are

required to work with a material of their choice to craft an item to be used as an architectural element. Our various workshops and studios in the area will facilitate this activity.

2.1 Natural materials lab

Collecting of three samples of different natural materials that have the potential of being used as building materials.

Individual field trips will also be required to fulfill the requirements of acquiring materials for the sample boxes and to produce hand sketches of existing buildings each individual student will select. Furthermore, in the setting of the Santa Chiara Campus students will be encouraged to explore and test the applicability of natural building materials. Materials and methods that will be touched upon include but are not limited to the following:

Earths

Adobe; Compressed Soil Block; Rammed Earth; Cast Earth etc.

Clays

Brick; Roof Tile: Ceramic Tile; clay block etc.

Stones

Granite; Limestone: Flagstone; river stone etc.

Trees

Mesquite; Cedar; Oaks; Pine; Bamboo;

Kilns

Lime cement; stucco; clay

Iron Forge

Glass

“Boveda” Brick vaults and domes

3. Free hand sketching

Free hand sketching and non mechanical drawings are highly encouraged in all of the above explained exercises. In order to develop this essential skill, regular studio practice sessions, guest lectures and monthly peer group sessions will be taking place throughout the semester. Students are instructed to keep two sketch books: pocket size of 3.5' x 5.5' for sketching during the field trips and studio sketchbook of 5.25' x 8.25' inches or larger for studio sessions. Apart from scheduled field visits, travel your own to collect samples of the region, but also make sure to complete at least 3 sketches of buildings of your selection, preferably period

architectural pieces such as churches, civic and farm buildings constructed utilizing natural building materials.

Grades

Grades are a reflection of the quality and dedication reflected in your research, designs and presentation both graphic and verbal. Class participation is a major component as well.

Attendance is mandatory to all sessions and field trips.

Grading will be based on performance and dedication both individually and in groups.

Attendance to class is required.

2/3 of the final grade will be based on work performed in Design & Construction task.

1/3 of the final grade will be based on performance and dedication of work performed as part of the urban and architectural documentation team.

Bibliography

The Barefoot Architect, **Johan van Lengen**, Shelter Publications, Inc. (October 28, 2007)

Design Like You Give a Damn: Architectural Responses to Humanitarian Crises, **Architecture for Humanity**, Metropolis Books; 1st edition (January 15, 2006)

1. The Earth Manual CRATERRE (Get your copy from Copy Corner, 2307 Texas Avenue South College Station, TX 77840-4737, Phone: (979) 693-0640)

Policies

Studio culture at Texas A&M

All students, faculty, administration and staff of the Department of Architecture at Texas A&M University are dedicated to the principle that the Design Studio is the central component of an effective education in architecture.

They are equally dedicated to the belief that students and faculty must lead balanced lives and use time wisely, including time outside the design studio, to gain from all aspects of a university education and world experiences. They also believe that design is the integration of many parts, that process is as important as product, and that the act of design and of professional practice is inherently interdisciplinary, requiring active and respectful collaboration with others.

***The Operational Procedures** are intended to provide a framework for the successful development of an effective Studio Culture, both as a part of the academic program and as a model for future professional practice.*

Operational Procedures

Students and faculty in every design studio will embody the fundamental values of optimism, respect, sharing, engagement, and innovation. Every design studio will therefore encourage the rigorous exploration of ideas, diverse viewpoints, and the integration of all aspects of architecture (practical, theoretical, scientific, spiritual, and artistic), by providing a safe and supportive environment for thoughtful innovation.

Every design studio will increase skills in professional communication, through drawing, modeling, writing and speaking.

Every design studio will, as part of the syllabus introduced at the start of each class, include a clear statement on time management, and recognition of the critical importance of academic and personal growth, inside and outside the studio environment. As such it will be expected that faculty members and students devote quality time to studio activities, while respecting the need to attend to the broad spectrum of the academic life.

Every design studio will establish opportunities for timely and effective review of both process and products. Studio reviews will include student and faculty peer review. Where external reviewers are introduced, the design studio instructor will ensure that the visitors are aware of

the Studio Culture Statement and recognize that the design critique is an integral part of the learning experience.

The design studio will be recognized as place for open communication and movement, while respecting the needs of others, and of the facilities.

***The Dissemination and Oversight Procedures** are intended to ensure that all students, and all faculty members, whether assigned to design studios or not, are aware of the Studio Culture Policy and work together productively to maximize the value of this component of the departmental pedagogy.*

Oversight suggests peer-review and mentoring at all levels, and presumes a positive role for those charged with administration, including the exploration of innovative teaching approaches, and opportunities to demonstrate collaboration both within the academy, with the design professions, and with the society we serve.

Dissemination and oversight procedures

The statement will also be posted on the department and AIAS websites.

The Department Design Caucus will initiate a formal discussion on the statement at the start of each academic year, with express purpose of ensuring that all new and returning faculty members understand and embrace its philosophies, and understand its opportunities.

The AIAS and the administration of the Department will ensure regular and open communication on all aspect of the academic program, including Studio Culture.

The Head of Department will include consideration of Studio Culture as part of the Annual Review of faculty members. This may suggest the use of peer review, encouragement of visiting critics, and recognition that productive review of the process and outcomes of design is not the exclusive domain of those assigned to teach design studios.

Statement of disability (ADA) act

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities, in Cain Hall or call 845-1637.

3. Academic Integrity Statement

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do." For further information on Honor Council Rules and Procedures on the web please access

<http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor>