Architecture 607 – Fall 2011 – Portland – Howard Davis
Option 2 Seminar:
ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURE AND URBANISM

This is a required course for incoming Option 2 students.

The seminar will meet Thursdays from 9am to 11:50 am in room 555 of the White Stag Block, except for three sessions, when the meetings will be Wednesday from 6:15pm to 9:15pm. These sessions are on October 19 (the day before the Option 2 field trip departs), November 16, and November 23 (the day before Thanksgiving).

This seminar has several intentions:

1. To introduce and discuss several key issues in contemporary architectural thought and practice, that range across questions of the city, of construction, and of innovative practice.
2. To develop skills in architectural research and writing, group collaboration, and public presentation.
3. To introduce issues that are of interest to faculty in the UO Department of Architecture, and thereby to help make connections between students and faculty research interests that may lead to useful collaborations.
4. To discuss issues of urban design and architectural/urban practice in the context of Portland.

The seminar will be organized around a series of topics each of which represents an important current concern or set of concerns in the field. Each topic will be dealt with through directed readings and discussions (to be undertaken by everyone in the seminar) and detailed case studies (that will be undertaken by individuals and small groups, and presented to the entire group. The topics are the following:

1. Architectural beauty and the sense of place
2. Sustainability and the built environment
3. Community, equity and the city
4. The poetics of construction
5. New technologies of design and fabrication
6. New forms of architectural and urban practice

The seminar will be conducted through readings, discussions and student presentations. Students will work partly in groups and partly individually, and will be expected to:

1. Develop a verbal/visual presentation as part of a group effort, to be presented in preliminary form and as part of a final presentation.
2. Help lead a class discussion around a set of readings.
3. Prepare a final written report, following the final verbal/visual presentation.
4. Do the readings and participate fully in the seminar discussions.

A detailed schedule and reading list will be provided at the first session of the seminar. In addition to class meetings, students will be asked to attend the PUARL symposium in Portland the last weekend of October, various lectures during the term, and if possible the student research symposium in Eugene on Saturday October 15.