A Green Building in the Northwest

This studio will focus on the design of a high performance green building in a public or institutional context. It will be based on a real project with high performance expectations. We will explore advanced methods for designing and testing daylighting, comfort, ventilation and material systems. Our goal is to help you design a building that is beautiful and actually works.

The studio is co-taught by Charlie Brown and John Rowell, who bring complementary experience in design practice and technical consulting. We will teach and expect inspired design and rigorous analysis, and will offer a clear design process to allow for exploration of common themes, group reviews and discussion. We also expect that you will have specific interests that you will pursue at a “thesis” level. You will have the benefit of constructive design criticism from two perspectives, and have the support of the Energy Studies in Buildings Lab to pursue more in-depth analysis.

The specific project has not been selected, and we will engage the studio group in the fall to decide on a project that fits the studio agenda best and inspires you to do great work. We are seeking a real project that is in the early phases of development—programming or concept design—and a project where the studio group is able to meet the client and visit the site. The ideal project will have an ambitious sustainability goal, such as Living Building Challenge or LEED Platinum and be a manageable size of 50,000 – 100,000 square feet.

Plan on a field trip to the site the first week of winter term. We will likely begin at an urban design scale, but quickly move into conceptual building design. The goal by the end of the first term is to complete a schematic design cycle. The second term is devoted to development of the character and material systems of the project.

Specific emphases:

- Understanding the essence of a real project
- Communicating relevant design concepts in words and images
- Developing the skills and thought processes for effective design
- Exploring expressive media: conceptual graphics, physical models, hand drawings, digital tools
- Design development and detailing that is architecturally expressive and technically competent
- Conceptualizing a green building
- Developing a building that actually performs

This is an opportunity to pull together all that you have learned about design and apply it to a complex, signature building. This as an individual exploration, a statement of your values, insight and capability grounded in a real situation. You are expected to collaborate, participate and actively seek input. We are especially interested helping you strengthen your design process and understanding of the making of a building in a way that will be directly relevant to your next steps in the profession, and be a foundation for mature design.